

NEW YORK, JUNE 11, 1926

No. 1080

Price 8 Cents

FAME AND FORTUNE

STORIES OF BOYS

WEEKLY.

WHO MAKE MONEY.

A GAME BOY;
OR, FROM THE SLUMS TO WALLSTREET.

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

AND OTHER STORIES



"Sign!" exclaimed the masked leader, menacingly, pointing at the paper. "Sign!" echoed the six disguised brokers in sepulchral tones, making a similar motion toward the document. Bound, save his right arm, and gagged, what could Sid Fenton do?

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FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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A GAME BOY

OR, FROM THE SLUMS TO WALL STREET

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—In the Slums.

"What's the lay, Jenkins? Spit it out and don't keep us a-guessin' in the dark. If the scheme is a likely one, me and Toby is with you with both feet, for our funds is that low we'll soon be driven to doin' wrong, which ain't in our line, though I'll allow that Toby ain't partic'lar to a shade."

The speaker grinned sardonically as he pulled at an old briar-root pipe. He was a rough, shabby-looking man, compact of build, greatly in need of a shave, clean linen, and other accessories. His face was hard and repellent, with the reckless look of a person accustomed to taking desperate chances in life. By no stretch of the imagination could he be called a respectable member of society. On the contrary, truth compels us to declare that he was a professional crook, not many weeks out of Sing Sing prison, and his name was Bud Bradshaw. He and two companions were seated at a rude table, on which was spread the remains of a cheap meal on cracked crockery, kept in countenance by a bottle of vile whisky, in a back room of a rear tenement in one of the lowest neighborhoods of New York.

The block itself was full of dives and drinking saloons, kept by shady characters and frequented by still more shady customers, most of whose "mugs" were to be found at the "Rogues' Gallery" at No. 300 Mulberry Street, which is police headquarters. If a crook was "wanted" by the authorities, this was the first place the detectives looked for him, and if they didn't find their man it was generally because he had been tipped off in time to make himself scarce. The block in question might truly be called a part of the slums of New York, for it is doubtful if there was a more degraded or vicious section in the city. The individual referred to by Bud Bradshaw as Toby was, if anything, a shade more disreputable looking than Bud himself.

He was thin, wiry and short in stature, and was known to the police as a sneak thief who confined his operations, as a rule, to flat houses. While not exactly wanted at present, he was under the surveillance of the plain clothes men of the ward on general suspicion, and he found it prudent not to make himself too conspicuous. As Bradshaw was likewise being watched, that will account for the financial stringency that affected

them at the period this story opens. Jenkins, the third man of the trio around the table, looked decidedly out of place in his miserable surroundings. To begin with, he had an honest-looking face, but we are sorry to add that his countenance did him a great injustice, for he was a born crook.

He was an uncommonly shrewd fellow, and though he had been arrested several times for "second story" work, and once for highway robbery, nothing had been proved against him. At any rate, no Centre Street judge had yet had the pleasure of sending him up the river, and therefore he was an object of envy to his friends. Jenkins, whose other name was Tad, was never so hard pushed that he couldn't sport a decent suit of clothes, and this fact added to the illusion produced by the honest stamp of his good-looking features. We may also remark that Jenkins, when in New York, always rented a room in a respectable lodging-house in the Tenderloin, and he only visited the slums when he had business to transact with some individual who found it advisable to keep out of the limelight. On the present occasion Jenkins had called on Bud Bradshaw to talk business, and Bud was anxious to learn what was in the wind.

"The lay is a good one," replied Jenkins to Bradshaw; "but as one man couldn't begin to carry all the swag away I've come here to let you in on the job."

"If you want me you must take Toby, too," said Bud. "We're pals at present."

"If you'll guarantee that Toby can hold his end up I'll include him."

"Toby is all to the mustard. I'll be responsible for him."

"He looks smart enough," admitted the visitor. "Well, the thing is this: I've been working as gardener and 'second man' for George Noble, a stock broker, at his country residence in Scarsdale, for the past two months."

"What! Tryin' to turn over a new leaf and be honest?" grinned Bradshaw.

"Not quite. I heard that the Noble place offered inducements for persons in our line and I took the job in order to learn the ropes."

"Did it take you two months to learn what you wanted to know?"

"No; but I had reasons for not wanting to leave too quick. Things are ripe now, there is swag to

burn in the house, and if you and your pal will join me in this enterprise I'll guarantee you won't need to work again for a year unless you make ducks and drakes of your share of the plunder."

"What do you say, Toby? Do we take a hand with Jenkins?" asked Bradshaw, looking at his pal.

"You kin count me in to the limit," replied the sneak thief with animation. "I'm willin' to take considerable chances to make a prime haul."

"We're with yer," said Bradshaw, looking at their visitor. "I've got a kid I'd like to break into the business. What do yer say to takin' him along? He'll do to shove in at the pantry window, or through the cellar gratin', whichever is the handiest way of forcin' an entrance into the house."

"We'll take him if he's up to snuff," replied Jenkins.

"I'll see that he does his dooty," answered Bradshaw with an imprecation.

The visitor seemed satisfied, and finding that the bottle was empty he suggested an adjournment to a back room in one of the nearby saloons. As he had the coin to blow in the other two accepted his invitation with alacrity, and the three men rose and left the room. Scarcely had the men left the room when from one of the dark corners there issued a boy of fourteen years, whose bright, restless eyes looked around suspiciously, while his listening attitude was that of one who feared discovery. The only articles of wearing apparel upon his thin limbs were a pair of trousers, much too large for him, sustained by one suspender running diagonally across his chest, and a shirt which had not seen the wash-tub for a long time.

His hair, which sadly needed cutting, resembled a mop; his face was far from clean, and his feet were bare. He looked exactly what he was—a poor outcast of society, a thing that women pass by with pity and men with indifference; one who had already tasted the bitterness and woes of life, and for whom the future seemed to hold no encouragement. Apparently satisfied that the three men had gone, the boy rushed to the table, and cleaning the plates of the few scraps of food began to devour them in ravenous haste, keeping his eyes fixed on the door and all his senses on the alert. He had scarcely finished the last crust when he heard footsteps approaching along the entry on the other side of the door.

In a moment he darted over to the corner and vanished behind a box that stood there. The door opened and admitted a youth of about the same age as the first. His attire was ragged and dirty, and he had the advantage of the other youth, inasmuch as his back was covered with a jacket, and a tattered cap sat jauntily upon his head. There was a sharpness about his eyes that indicated a knowledge and suspicion of men far beyond his years, while he showed a reckless indifference concerning his rough-and-ready sphere in the social scale.

A lighted cigarette was stuck between his lips, and when he removed it for a moment two long puffs of slate-colored smoke issued from his nostrils and curled toward the filthy ceiling. He threw himself carelessly into one of the chairs and looked mechanically about the room. His gaze fastened on a milk bottle which towered above the crockery. Reaching out he seized it

and held it between him and the dull light that came through the dirty panes of the only window the room boasted.

"Not a drop," he ejaculated in a tone of disgust. "Might have known dat Bud wouldn't leave a bottle round wit' anythin' in it. Well, I don't keer."

He pulled a handful of small coin from his pocket, spread it upon the table and proceeded to count it.

"Forty-nine cents. If Bud suspicioned I had so much wealt' he'd hold me up and go t'rough me clothes."

While he was speaking the other boy came from behind the box and began creeping toward the door. In his anxiety to make his escape from the room as quietly as possible he forgot to watch out for obstructions and the result was he tripped over a stool. The boy at the table sprang on his feet and looked around. He instantly detected the other youth.

"Well, I'll be jiggered!" he exclaimed in some surprise.

Then he sprang between the other and the door.

"Tryin' to cut your lucky, eh?" he snapped, facing the first youth as he rose to his feet. "Think ye're smart, but yer ain't smart enough for me. How did yer git out of yer closet?"

"Let me pass," said the other in a fierce, concentrated tone.

"I will—like fun. What d'ye take me for? Me orders are to see dat yer don't fly de coop, so yer'll go back to yer hole at oncel."

"Never!" cried the other desperately.

"Never is a long day, cully," grinned the tough boy, spitting out the last of the cigarette.

"I won't stay here no longer."

"Dat so? We'll see about it."

He reached out to grab the first boy, who backed quickly away and placed the table between them.

"I'm not going to be made a thief of," cried the boy who was on the defensive.

"Oh, yer ain't, eh? Yer ought to be glad of de chance to make yer way ahead in de world."

"I can make my way ahead in an honest way."

"Will yer listen to dat? Yer'd rather work dan pick up de coin like a gent of leisure. Dat's grattitud for de trouble dat Bud is takin' wit' yer. If I wuz him I wouldn't bother wit' yer."

"Why does he? Why was I brought here by that fellow Toby? He and Bud hain't got no right to keep me here against my will. I don't want to stay. I won't stay," he added with flashing eyes.

"Yes, yer will. Yer'll stay as long as Bud wants to keep yer."

"I won't, I tell you," cried the other resolutely.

"How yer goin' to help yerself?" sneered the tough youth. "I'm not goin' to let yer out."

"I'm going in spite of you," said the first boy desperately.

"Let's see yer try it," replied the hard boy sneeringly.

The answer the other returned was to push the table over at him and spring for the door. The table fell with a crash, and the edge struck the tough boy's bare toes. He uttered a howl of pain and danced about the room like a monkey on a hot stove, while the first boy pulled open the door and ran—into the arms of Bud Bradshaw, who was in the act of entering, followed by Toby.

CHAPTER II.—The Reason Why.

"Ouch!" exclaimed Bradshaw, as the boy's head butted into his stomach.

Whatever chance the youth might have had to escape owing to the surprise of the two men was lost by his own surprise at running against them unexpectedly. Before he recovered Bud grabbed him by the arm and pushed him back into the room.

"What in thunder does this mean?" roared Bud angrily. "What's the matter with you, Snorkey? How did this young monkey get out of his den?"

Bradshaw fired his questions at the tough youth like pistol shots and Master Snorkey, holding his injured toes in one hand, concluded it was best for him to answer at once.

"I dunno how he got out," he replied sulkily. "He throwed de table over on me toes and nearly mashed 'em, den he put for de door hot-foot."

"Why didn't you stop him, you young imp? Didn't I tell you to keep your eye on him when we were out? If we hadn't come back when we did he might have got clear off."

"I did stop him when he fust tried to git away, but he got behind de table and stood me off. Den he fired it over on me foot. Oh, lor'! It hurts like blazes," and Snorkey caressed his injured leg and toes. "I'll fix youse for dat, see if I don't," he said, shaking his fist at the prisoner.

"How did you get out of your closet?" Bud cried, shaking the unfortunate boy.

The lad maintained a dogged silence.

"Won't answer, eh? Well, you'll go back into it ag'in," dragging him toward a door which opened into another room.

"You haven't no right to keep me a prisoner in this house," said the boy.

"Shut up! I'm goin' to make a man of you."

"A thief, you mean. Well, I won't be one."

"You'll be just what I choose to make you, d'ye hear? or I'll give you a knock on the head and drop you in the sewer," snarled Bradshaw.

He yanked the boy into the next room and then discovered how the lad had got out of the dark closet in which he had been imprisoned for over a week. He had kicked the bottom of the door clear of its hinge and then crawled through the space where the door yielded. Bud swore roundly when he saw the damage done by the prisoner, cuffed him several times about the ears, unlocked the door and shoved him back into his coop. Then he sent Toby to borrow a hammer and some nails with which to repair the door.

"So you're goin' to take that kid along with us to Scarsdale?" said Toby, when he and Bradshaw were seated at the table fifteen minutes later sampling a fresh bottle of whisky Jenkins had bought for them.

"I am," growled Bud, who was not in the best of humor.

"I think it's foolish. What good will he be to us? Besides, he's bound to give us no end of trouble."

"If he puts on any didos with me I'll make him a subject for the morgue."

"I don't see no use tryin' to eddicate him to the business. He ain't got it in him. Besides, he's dead ag'in it. He's just as liable as not to give us the slip and sp'ile the job."

"Let him try it, and he'd never see daylight ag'in."

"You seem to take a whole lot of interest in him. Who is he, anyway?"

"He's my nephew."

"Your nevvy, eh?"

"Well, I married his mother's sister."

"I didn't know you was married."

"I ain't at present. The old woman got a divorce when she found out how I made a livin'."

"How long ago was that?"

"About five years. I got square with her, though."

"How did you?"

"She thought a whole lot of this boy. I had him kidnapped and brought to New York."

"From where?"

"Boston."

"How long ago did you do that?"

"Two years. He was twelve years old at the time. I handed him over to old Mother Scrooge to make use of him in her junk-shop. She's seen to it that he never got a chance to give her the slip. He was a spunky little chap at first, but I guess she took all the nonsense out of him. I've seen her beat him deaf, dumb and blind more'n once. He's been licked, and starved, and knocked around so much that he's next door to a shadder, as you must have noticed."

Yes, he looks pretty thin. When I took him his grub he grabbed at it like a starved animal. You said his name was Fenton, didn't you?"

"Yes, Sid Fenton. It'll look well in the police reports one of these days," chuckled Bradshaw.

"Then your idea for makin' him a crook, if you kin, is to clinch your revenge on your wife that was?"

"That's it. She'd no right to go back on me 'cause I got pulled in for a job in Chelsea and sent to prison for five years; but she did, and I swore I'd get square with her. She tried to find the boy after I got hold of him, but as she didn't have no money to speak of she couldn't make much headway. She doesn't know whether he's dead or not. As soon as I can get him pinched for some job I'll see that she gets the news. Then she'll know that he ain't no better'n I am."

"Your scheme is all right if you kin make it work, but I doubt if you kin. As I said before, that boy ain't cut out for no crook. He's goin' to fight hard agin' you. If you wasn't so dead set about the matter you might see yourself that you've bitten off more than you kin chew. Better send him back to Mother Scrooge and let her hammer him into potter's field. That ought to be revenge enough for you. It would for me."

Toby's advice was not palatable to Bradshaw, who was getting drunk and ugly over the whisky, and he started in to quarrel with his companion. The sneak thief was prudent enough not to have anything more to say on the subject, as he wouldn't have stood much show in a scrap with the burly Bud, and the impending trouble gradually blew over. In the meantime how fared it with Sid Fenton in the closet of the next room? Badly enough. Beaten, abused and half starved as he had been for the past two years, he was indeed a mere shadow of what he was at twelve years when kidnapped from Boston. But for all that he had endured enough to break the spirit of any other young lad of his years, he was a game boy to the backbone.

Pluck and dogged resistance to oppression had been born in him, and it would manifest itself as long as he drew the breath of life. Sterling honesty, and a tendency to do what was right in the face of every obstacle, was also a part of his nature, not only implanted at his birth, but constantly inculcated by the teachings of his good aunt up to the time of his abduction. Only in outward appearance, wrought by the misery and wicked companionship he had been forced to endure, did he look like a part of the slums. Toby had made no mistake in his estimation of Sid's character when he remarked that the boy wasn't cut out for a crook. It wasn't possible to make him one, and if Bud Bradshaw hadn't been so thick-headed and revengeful he would have understood that job he had undertaken was futile. The rascal, however, was bent on carrying his point, and like many other short-sighted people he came to grief.

Sid made no further attempt to escape from his prison pen that day. He judged it would be useless. But he was more than ever determined to escape from his unsavory surroundings and make his way back to Boston by hook or by crook. About five o'clock Toby visited him with an unusually plentiful supply of food, which included a cup of coffee. Sid looked at the provender in astonishment. He could not remember when he had been treated to such a meal before, at least since he had been brought to New York. He was so hungry, however, that he did not waste time thinking about the matter, but cleaned up everything in sight. As he drained the last drop of the coffee he sank back with a sigh of content. Toby watched him with a wicked grin, took the dishes and locked the door again. Ten minutes later Sid was unconscious, in the grasp of a drugged sleep.

CHAPTER III.—Sid Finds Himself in a Strange Place.

When Sid came to his senses again he was conscious that a change had taken place in his surroundings. He was no longer penned in a dark, ill-smelling closet, but had the liberty of a fair-sized attic. Bright sunshine shone through the many interstices in a pair of closed shutters outside a glass window, and imparted a genial glow to the room. The boy looked around him in surprise.

"Where am I, I wonder? Am I dreaming, or is this the real thing? Looks as if I had been taken somewhere while I slept. It couldn't be far, or I should have woke up," mused Sid, who had no suspicion that he had been drugged, or that he had been carried completely out of New York City up into Westchester County, and locked up in the attic of a small, old-fashioned house on the outskirts of Scarsdale.

He got on his feet and walked to the window. He tried to raise the lower sash of the window, but found it was nailed tight. The upper one was also fixed so it could not be moved.

"Whatever the change, I appear to be still a prisoner," he said.

He peered through the glass opposite the holes in the shutters. To his astonishment there were only two or three distant houses in sight. Clearly he had been carried into the country. How this

had been effected without his knowledge he could only understand. The sight of green fields and open air was so new to him that he gazed long and rapturously at the view before him. During the last two years he had not seen even a shrub, and as to the open air, all he had seen of it was what he could catch between the backs of low tenements, a space that was so contracted, and filled with sewer-like smells, that it was little better than a funnel for all the villainous odors of the immediate neighborhood.

How the boy managed to exist under the conditions to which he had been subjected was something of a miracle, considering that he had not been used to them. Sid could see a road on which automobiles and other vehicles passed occasionally. He also heard the long whistle of a train approaching the Scarsdale station. After he had feasted his eyes on the beauties of suburban life for some time it occurred to him to try the door of the attic. He was not greatly disappointed to find it locked, for he had expected as much. There was another window on the other side of the room and he went to it. It was fastened up like the other, and the shutters not having any holes in them he could see nothing through them.

He felt satisfied that the view was more or less similar to what he had been gazing on, and he returned to the other window again. Finally, after another long look, he sat down on the floor and began to wonder why he had been brought there. The change was certainly a very agreeable one to him, but the mystery of it challenged speculation. Undoubtedly there was a reason behind it, and he tried to figure out what that reason could be. Suddenly he recalled the conversation about the projected robbery of the house of a broker named George Noble at a place called Scarsdale which he had overheard between Bradshaw, his pal Toby and the man named Jenkins, the previous day just before he made his futile attempt to escape from the house in New York. Sid had never heard of Scarsdale before, but as the broker had his country residence there, he judged that it was some small out-of-town place. Just where Scarsdale was located he had no idea, but he believed it could not be very far from New York.

"Looks to me as if these rascals have come to Scarsdale to put that job of theirs through, and that they brought me with them. Do they expect me to help them? If they do they're going to be left. I know Bradshaw intends to try and make a thief out of me. I heard him tell Mother Scrooge that he intended to get square with my aunt through me, because she got a divorce from him after she found out what kind of man he really was. He may be able to do me up, but he'll never make a thief of me if he should try for a hundred years."

Sid spoke the last sentence out aloud, and he thumped his leg in an emphatic way, which left no doubt but he was thoroughly in earnest. He wondered in what way the crooks expected to make use of him.

"If they take me on their thieving expedition, and I get the slightest chance I'll put a spoke in their wheel if I die for it," he said resolutely. "I may be only a boy, but a boy can do a whole lot sometimes. I've no doubt they'll watch me carefully, but I'm going to watch them, too. Maybe they'll find there's more in me than they think."

I'd like to surprise them, and I'll do it, too, if I can."

Soon after midday Sid heard somebody at the door, which presently opened and admitted Toby with a tray containing some food.

"Here's your dinner, Sid Fenton. I'll leave it here," he said. "How d'ye like your new quarters?"

"I like it better than the city, and I'd like it better still if I wasn't cooped up in this room."

"If you behave yourself and act sensibly you won't be cooped up much longer," replied Toby insinuatingly.

"What do you mean by behaving myself and acting sensibly?" asked Sid, thinking to draw the sneak thief out.

"Your Uncle Bud will tell you about it later on."

"How far from New York is this place?"

"Not more'n a hundred miles," grinned Toby.

"How did you bring me here without me knowing anything about it?"

"You want to know too much."

"I'd like to know that."

"Well, it's one of the tricks of the trade."

"What trade?"

"The easy money trade," chuckled Toby.

"I'd like to know why I was brought here. It wasn't for nothing."

"No, you can gamble on that."

"Ain't you going to tell me?"

"Not a word. I'm not lookin' for trouble."

"Then you'd get into trouble by telling me?"

"That's about the size of it. Bud insisted on fetchin' you, though I told him he was foolish. You ain't any good here that I kin see."

"Do you think Bradshaw will tell why he brought me?"

"I guess he will. If he doesn't you'll find out anyway."

"How will I find out?"

"That's up to you, my pippin," grinned the thief. "Better eat your dinner, for you ain't had no breakfast."

"Why, what time is it?" asked Sid in surprise. "I only woke up about an hour ago."

"You took an extra long snooze," chuckled the rascal. "It's after one o'clock."

"After one!"

"That's what it is. You overslept yourself, cully."

"I never did that before," replied Sid, rather puzzled to account for the lapse of time.

"That's because Mother Scrooge wouldn't let you. Bud is easier with you. Do as he wants you to and you'll live in clover. Pull agin' him and you may become a subject for an undertaker. When he means business somethin' has got to give, and if you take my word for it it won't be him."

With those significant words Toby left the room and locked the door after him. They made little impression on Sid, for the food occupied his whole attention at present. It was good and plentiful, and he was so hungry that there was nothing left when he got through. Sid could not understand how it was afternoon instead of morning.

"I must have been fagged out to have slept through the journey from New York to this place, and then clean up to noon besides. I don't see how I did it, but if Toby says it's one o'clock I suppose it is."

Sid spent the whole afternoon at intervals looking out through the holes in the blinds. Although his view was very contracted, he could still see enough to interest him greatly, especially after being cooped up for two years in the back room or back yard of Mother Scrooge's junk-shop, sorting out bottles, rags, old metal, and a hundred other items that the old harridan did business in. About sundown Toby returned for the tray of dirty dishes, and retired with it without uttering a word. At dusk he brought Sid his supper, and while the boy was eating it Bradshaw made his appearance with Jenkins. Although the latter individual was now disguised in a sandy wig and bushy whiskers of the same hue, Sid knew him, even though he had only seen him once before, on the day he had visited Bradshaw's quarters in New York with his proposition to rob Broker Noble's country home. It soon became evident that Jenkins had come up especially to inspect Sid. He sized the boy up, asked him a few questions, and then pulling Bradshaw outside told that rascal that Eid couldn't take any part in their enterprise.

"Why not? I brought him here on purpose to initiate him," replied Bud, evidently not at all pleased with Jenkins' ultimatum.

"I don't care what you brought him for," replied Jenkins brusquely. "I thought when you spoke of bringing a kid along it was Shorkey you meant. Why, this boy might spoil the whole job. He doesn't know one thing about the business, and further, I don't fancy his mug. He doesn't look as if he could be trusted. If you've started a kindergarten for young would-be crooks you can't work none of your raw material off on me. I'm not taking any more chances than I can help. If I wasn't foxy I'd have been in Sing Sing long ago instead of giving the detectives the laugh. This job tonight is too good a thing to be queered by a bungler like that boy inside."

"He won't bungle nothin'. I'd put a ball through his head if he didn't do the right thing," said Bud.

"Well, there's no use of you arguing the matter. He isn't coming with us. You can break him in on one of your own jobs, but I won't have him in mine."

As Jenkins meant what he said, and was bossing the night's enterprise, Bradshaw, much against his will, gave in, and they went downstairs together. Sid had heard them arguing the matter, and he listened at the keyhole to all they said. He knew now that the house must be near Scarsdale, and that the three crooks were going to carry out their scheme that night.

"They'll leave me here all alone till they get back with their swag, supposing the job is a success. They'll be away two hours at least, I should think. I wonder if I couldn't break out in that time? I mean to try, at any rate. I believe I'd rather die than go back to that den in New York. If I can't break open that door I'll bet I can get out by one of those windows. It's a pretty big drop to the ground. If I sprained or broke my leg it would spoil all my chances. The door is really the only safe way to get out. If I had a heavy piece of—what's that in the corner? By jingo! A section of iron pipe. That will be just the thing to smash in the door with. I'll be out of the room and the house in short order the mo-

ment the coast is clear, and I'd like to see anybody stop me with that iron pipe in my hands."

Having made his plans for his escape, Sid waited in subdued excitement for the time to come around for the crooks to start on their enterprise.

CHAPTER IV.—The Knocking Out of a Game Boy.

Hour after hour went by, and though the house was silent so far as to sounds reaching Sid in the attic, he knew the men must be waiting in one of the rooms downstairs for the hour of their departure to come around. As time passed Sid's impatience and excitement increased. He felt as if the most important issue of his young life was at stake. At last he heard footsteps on the stairs. They were not very loud, as if the person was making his ascent in a cautious manner, but the boy's sharp ears, on edge for the least sound that would indicate to him that the crooks were leaving the building, heard them. Instantly it occurred to him that either Toby or Bradshaw was coming to see if he was asleep, as he naturally should be at that time under the circumstances, for he had been left in the dark with nothing but his thoughts to entertain him.

Sid crept over to the mattress which had been provided for him, lay down on it at full length, and half closed his eyes, but every nerve in his body was tingling at the thought that the time was nearly at hand when he would be able to make a break for his freedom at last. The footsteps reached the landing outside, softly crossed it and stopped at the door. Then Sid heard the key turn in the lock, though it made hardly any noise. Through his half-closed lids he saw the gleam of a candle, and its reflection, shaded by a man's hand, showed him the countenance of Bud Bradshaw. He stood listening at the doorway, and Sid began to breathe like a person in a deep sleep.

Bradshaw tiptoed across the room, stooped down and held the candle near his face. Sid never made a move, but continued his simulated slumber. Apparently satisfied that the boy was asleep, Bradshaw withdrew as cautiously as he had entered, stopping in the doorway to listen again. Then he closed and locked the door, and presently Sid heard him descending the stairs. The boy sprang up and placed his ear at the key-hole. He listened intently till the sounds died away downstairs, and complete silence succeeded the shutting of a door somewhere below. Hearing nothing further during the ensuing five minutes he ran to the window and peered out into the night. It was a starlit night, and fairly light. As Sid looked through the holes in the shutters he saw three shadows walk away from the building, one of them carrying a suitcase in his hand. Although he could not make out their faces, he felt assured from their figures, and the fact that there were three of them together, that they were Bradshaw, Toby and Jenkins, bound on their midnight expedition against Broker Noble's house.

He noted the direction they took until they vanished in the gloom, and then he was ready for action. Groping his way to where the heavy piece of iron pipe stood against the wall he seized it, and going to the door shoved it against the wood

near the lock with all his strength. The door shivered and the sound reverberated through the house. A second blow caused the wood to crack and a third smashed a hole in the panel. Another blow a little higher up knocked a piece of wood out, leaving an opening big enough for him to put his hand through. Feeling around he grasped the key, turned it and then all he had to do was to pull it open and walk out on the dark landing. Carrying the section of pipe in his hand he slipped down the stairs to the landing below, and thence to the ground floor. Opening the first door he came to he found himself in the kitchen. The door of the kitchen was locked and the key gone, but he threw up one of the windows and jumped outside.

"Free at last," he exclaimed joyfully. "Now, which way shall I go?"

A road was only a few yards away, and Sid made for it, turning his face haphazard in the direction of the town. As he walked along, enjoying the freshness of the night, or rather early morning, air, and the exhilaration of freedom, he began to consider his future movements. To begin with, it struck him that it his duty, first of all, to try and save Broker Noble's house from being robbed. But he didn't know where Mr. Noble's house was, nor had he the least idea where he would find a policeman. While he was considering the matter as he walked along he heard the sound of an automobile behind him. He decided to stop it, and tell his story to the persons in it. So when it drew near he sprang into its path and shouted out an earnest request to stop.

"What's the matter?" asked a fine-looking gentleman in the back seat as the chauffeur brought the machine to a halt.

"I'd like to tell you something of great importance, sir," said Sid.

The gentleman looked doubtfully at the ill-attired boy, and then said:

"What is it you want to tell me?"

"I've just escaped from three crooks who brought me to this place, which I believe is Scarsdale."

"You have just escaped from three crooks!" cried the gentleman in astonishment.

"Yes. They are on their way to rob the country house of a broker named George Noble."

The gentleman uttered a startled exclamation.

"Come closer, my lad," said the gentleman, leaning out of the machine. "Are you telling me the truth?"

"I am."

"James," to the chauffeur, "flash your electric light on this boy."

The man took a long cylindrical object out of his pocket, pointed it at the boy and pressed a spring. A bull's-eye light brought the young stranger into bright relief, and showed up all his shortcomings. His disreputable appearance made a bad impression on the gentleman.

"Who are you?" he asked sharply.

"My name is Sid Fenton."

"What's that? Sid Fenton!" cried the gentleman, looking at him searchingly. "How old are you?"

"Fourteen."

"Where are you from?"

"New York. I've been held a prisoner in a bad

section of that city for two years, ever since I was kidnapped from Boston."

The gentleman uttered another ejaculation of astonishment.

"Have you an aunt named Sarah Harper, who was married to a rascal named Bradshaw?"

"Yes, sir," replied Sid, astonished in his turn.

"Jump in next to me," said the gentleman. Sid did so.

"So you are the Sid Fenton who was kidnapped from Boston? Who did it? Bradshaw?" said the gentleman after telling his chauffeur to proceed at full speed to the police station.

"Yes, sir."

"And he has kept you under cover ever since, eh?"

"No, sir. He turned me over to a hard old woman named Mother Scrooge, who keeps a junk store in New York. I've been beaten and half starved right along. Bradshaw took me away from her about a week ago, intending to make a thief out of me. But he couldn't do that if he beat me to death," replied the boy resolutely. "He brought me out here to take part in the robbery of the broker's house, but as the man who seemed to be bossing the job refused to have me in it I was left behind in the house from which I have just made my escape."

"How long is it since those rascals started for my house?"

"Your house?"

"Yes. I am George Noble, stock broker."

Sid gave a gasp of surprise.

"Are you, really?" he asked.

"Yes. Answer my question, please."

"A little over an hour ago," answered Sid.

"Where is the house in which you were left?"

"Over yonder. About half a mile from where you picked me up."

"The rascals haven't more than reached my house by this time. Thanks to your timely warning, my lad, we'll be able to catch them on the premises. My wife and children are away at present, but my housekeeper is in charge. You will no doubt be surprised to learn that that lady is your aunt, Sarah Harper."

"Is my Aunt Sarah at your house, Mr. Noble?" cried Sid in joyful surprise.

"She is, and has been for a year."

Sid felt like shouting.

"I'm awful glad," he said. "She'll be tickled to death to see me, I'll bet."

"You may be sure she will. She has grieved for you as though you were her own son; and she has never given up hope that some day you would turn up."

The automobile drew up in front of the little police station in Scarsdale, and Mr. Noble, taking Sid with him, got out and entered the building. The man in charge was dozing in an armchair, and their entrance awoke him. He recognized the broker as one of the wealthy residents of the neighborhood. Mr. Noble briefly told him that three New York crooks were now in the act of robbing his house, and he wanted several officers to go over there at once and take them by surprise. The police force of Scarsdale was limited, and only one officer was available at that hour. Volunteers, however, were speedily secured, and the whole party being squeezed into the auto after a fashion the chauffeur started for the Noble country house.

To avoid attracting the notice of the burglars the machine was stopped about two hundred yards away, and all but the chauffeur went forward, Sid walking beside the broker. There was no evidence from the outside that crooks were in that vicinity, but a brief investigation showed that one of the kitchen windows had been forced with a jimmy, and the back door was found unfastened. Stationing two men there, and sending Sid to watch in front, the rest of the party entered the house with the utmost caution. Mr. Noble kept his silverware in a safe in the dining-room wall. The door had been blown open, without a great deal of noise, and the three crooks were in the act of packing the valuable ware up when they were surprised by the posse. They were ordered to throw up their hands and yield.

Bradshaw and Toby sullenly did so, as a revolver pointed at each of their heads enforced obedience. Jenkins, however, was too spry for the party and sprang for the entry door. A pistol shot passed harmlessly past his head. He rushed upstairs to the second floor, threw up a window and jumped to the lawn. As he dashed for the front gate Sid saw him and sprang after him. Several of the posse followed as soon as they could get out of the house. The boy caught up with Jenkins just as the rascal laid his hand on the iron gate.

"You here!" cried Jenkins. "When did—what in thunder do you mean by blocking the gate? Don't you see we're pursued?"

"Yes, and you're my prisoner," replied Sid, grabbing him around the waist with both arms.

"You infernal little traitor, so you've turned on us, have you? Let go, or—"

He tore Sid's hold away, for he was a strong, athletic fellow, and giving the boy a push that sent him a yard away tried to escape through the gate. But Sid was on him again like a tenacious bulldog. The situation was getting desperate for the rascal. With an imprecation he struck the boy a blow in the face that dazed him, and drawing his revolver tried again to get through the gate. Sid was, as we have already said, a game boy. He determined that Jenkins should not escape. The man was already half through the gate when Sid grabbed him by the jacket and prevented him from going further. Three men from the house were now close at hand and the game seemed up with Jenkins; but he was equal to the emergency. He struck at Sid with the barrel of his revolver, drawing blood from his head, but the boy wouldn't let go.

"You will have it, you infernal little monkey!" cried the cornered crook.

He pressed the revolver against Sid's side and fired. The brave boy uttered a low cry and sank unconscious to the ground. As his fingers relaxed their grip on Jenkins' jacket the rascal tore himself loose and flew up the road at full speed, speedily vanishing around a turn in the direction of town.

CHAPTER V.—Sid Becomes a Wall Street Messenger.

When Sid recovered consciousness twelve hours later he found himself in bed in a handsomely furnished room, through the western windows of which the sun was shining brightly. A strange

feeling of weakness and lassitude oppressed him. He hardly felt able to turn his head on the pillow, or move his arms that lay listlessly on the outside of the coverlet. Evidently there was something radically wrong with him, but what it was he did not seem able to make out. As his eyes roamed from the ceiling on which they had first rested to the body of the room he began to be conscious that somebody sat beside the bed. That somebody, who had been watching his pale face and closed eyes with motherly solicitude for several hours, bent over and laid her hand upon his fevered brow. Sid's eyes encountered hers, and in an instant he recognized his Aunt Sarah, from whose tender care he had been kidnapped two years since. His lips formed her name, but such was his weakness that no sound came forth.

"Dear, dear Sid," floated to his ears from the woman's gentle voice, as she bent still lower and imprinted a kiss on his forehead.

Sid wanted to ask her what was the matter with him and where he was, but he lacked the power of expression. He was as helpless as an infant. The pistol wound he had received from Jenkins was as near fatal as such a thing could be without wiping the victim out. The doctor called in by Mr. Noble shook his head doubtfully after he had examined the wounded boy. However, he did the best his skill was capable of, and announced that the chances were rather against the boy recovering.

"If he is alive at the end of twelve hours he will have a fighting chance for his life," he said solemnly. "I fear, however, he may pass away without recovering his senses."

Such was the unfavorable verdict of the doctor, and it was received with deep regret by the broker, who communicated the sad news to his housekeeper, whose great joy over the recovery of her boy, as she called Sid, was dampened by the thought of the critical condition in which he had been brought home to her. She dropped on her knees beside his bed and prayed long and earnestly that Sid might be spared to her, for he was the only object she had in the world to love. Then, feeling a bit comforted, she took her place beside him and waited long and tirelessly for some sign that would tell her that Heaven had answered her prayer. Now the twelve hours had slipped away and Sid was not dead, but, on the contrary, he had come to his senses and recognized her.

"He will live! He will live!" she murmured hopefully.

It was about this time that the doctor called again, more than half expecting to be told that his young patient was dead. He felt the boy's pulse, took his temperature, and announced that he was a shade better.

"The chances are about even now," he told Sid's aunt. "See that all my instructions are carefully carried out, and we will hope for the best."

Then he went away, promising to call again that evening. Toward night Sid realized what was the matter with him. Memory recalled the scene at the gate in the early hours of the morning, and he remembered that Jenkins had shot him. Next day Sid's condition continued favorable, and the doctor was still more hopeful of his recovery. It was ten days, however, before he passed the danger line and entered on the road

to recovery. Then he was able to tell his story to his aunt, and she wept over the sad fate that had been his for two years. She repeated the story to the broker, who was very much interested in Sid, for he was grateful to the boy for saving his home from being robbed by the trio of scamps.

"I will see that he gets a start in life, Mrs. Harper," he said. "So you have no cause to worry about his future, for I can see he is a smart boy, and a game boy, too, and is bound to reach the top of the ladder in time if he lives."

Bud Bradshaw and his pal Toby were sent to the county jail at White Plains. The evidence presented at their examination caused the magistrate to hold them for trial. Sid was fully recovered and about when their trial came on and he appeared in the witness chair against them. They were convicted and got ten years each. Tad Jenkins was not captured. He returned to his room in New York, packed his trunk and took a train for the West long before Sid was in condition to furnish the police with information about him. On Sid's complaint Mother Scrooge was arrested and arraigned before a city magistrate, but she worked her pull and got off with six months on the Island. Sarah Harper resigned her position as housekeeper with the Noble family, much to the regret of the broker and his family, and hired a small flat in the Bronx for Sid and herself.

Mr. Noble had already fixed things so that Sid was to go to work in his office as messenger boy, the late messenger being promoted to a desk in the counting-room. The broker also presented Sid with \$1,000 as a nest-egg for his future. So on the Monday morning after Sarah Harper and Sid took possession of their little flat the boy reported at Mr. Noble's office ready to go to work. As he was not familiar with the metropolis even a little bit, particularly the financial district, the former messenger was detailed to break him in. It didn't take Sid long to master the Wall Street district, or his duties as a broker's office boy and messenger, and inside of a couple of weeks no one could have told but he had been living in New York all his life.

He soon proved himself one of the brightest and smartest messengers in Wall Street. He never made any serious blunder in the course of his duties, and always behaved in such a gentlemanly way that not only Mr. Noble, but all the brokers with whom he came into contact, declared he was one of the nicest boys in the Street. The clerks in the office liked him, too, for there was nothing "fresh" about Sid. He attended strictly to business, which kept him out of trouble, and though he made many friends among the other messengers, he never wasted any of his employer's time chinning to them or skylarking during business hours. After his first year, when he had reached the age of fifteen, he began to take an interest in the market, though not to the extent of making any deal with the money he had in bank.

He was a shrewd lad, and argued that he was still green in Wall Street methods, and it would be foolish for him to take chances until he had grown more experienced. So he applied himself assiduously to studying the market as closely as circumstances permitted him. He also kept his eyes and ears wide open in order to pick up all the information he could, and he helped the good work along by reading the more important finan-

cial papers every morning before his work for the day began, often getting down half an hour before any of the clerks arrived at their desks. In this way he laid the foundation for his subsequent success in life. One day after he had been two years with Mr. Noble he picked up a valuable tip in the office of a broker to whom he had carried a note.

Sid was shrewd enough to understand that he had got hold of a good thing. The more important point, however, was to turn it to his own advantage. He had learned that a clique of wealthy brokers had got together for the purpose of boozing P. & G. stock, which just then was selling low in the market. After carefully considering the matter he reached the conclusion that it would be safe for him to make his first deal. He had \$1,081.20 in the savings bank, the \$81.20 representing the interest that had accumulated since the original deposit was made. He drew the \$1,000 and bought 100 shares of P. & G. at 49. His luck was phenomenal in this deal, as the stock was boozed to nearly 80. Sid thought it had gone high enough for him when it reached 75, and so he sold out at that figure, and was delighted to find that he had made a profit of a little over \$2,500, raising his capital to \$3,500.

He said nothing to Mr. Noble about his success in the market, but he told his aunt, and she congratulated him on his good fortune. Six months later he made another deal, this time on his own judgment in B. & O. He bought 250 shares at 130 at the little banking and brokerage house on Nassau Street he had patronized before, and when the shares advanced nearly seven points he sold out at a profit of about \$1,600. An hour afterward the stock fell back five points, and Sid had reason to congratulate himself on getting out in the nick of time. This deal raised his capital to \$5,000. Three months afterward he took a flyer in A. & B. at 62, buying 250 shares, and a rise of eight points added \$2,000 more to his financial standing. Thus three years and three months passed away, and Sid reached the age of seventeen and a half years, and had come to consider himself quite a little capitalist, while his aunt and his employer looked upon him as one of the most promising young men in the city of New York.

CHAPTER VI.—Sid Lights on His Second Tip.

"Sid, take this note over to Mr. Alfred Baker," said Mr. Noble one morning.

"Yes, sir," replied the young messenger, taking the envelope and hastening into the next room for his hat.

Two minutes later he was on the sidewalk, heading for New Street. He went down New to the corner of Exchange Place and took an elevator to the fourth floor of the massive office building. On turning the corner of the main corridor he ran full tilt into a tough-looking A. D. T. messenger.

"Hey! What's de matter wit' youse, anyway?" snapped the tough boy. "Can't youse see where ye're goin'?"

"How about yourself? It's six of one and half-a-dozen of the other," laughed Sid. "You ran into me as much as I did into you."

"Ye're a liar! I didn't run into yer."

"Seems to me I've met you before," said Sid, who half recognized the youth. "Isn't your name Snorkey?"

"Yes, me name is Snorkey. What of it?"

"You seem to have connected with an honest job after all."

"What yer mean by dat? Did youse t'ink I was a crook?"

"I s'pose you don't remember me?"

"Naw, I don't. Never seen yer before."

"Yes, you did. You saw me three years and a half ago in a house on —— Street. I was trying to escape from the place and you stopped me. Then I threw the table against you and it fell on your feet. I s'pose you don't remember that?"

Snorkey, however, did remember the incident. He stuck his head forward and looked hard at Sid. There was such a big difference between Sid Fenton at seventeen and a half, well dressed and healthy, and Sid at fourteen, when he was a half-starved boy of the slums, with no clothes to speak of, that Snorkey did not recognize him.

"Say, who are youse, anyway?" he asked, somewhat puzzled.

"I'm Sid Fenton."

The name did not seem to produce any illumination in Snorkey's mind. He did not remember it at all.

"I s'pose yer t'inks youse kin make me believe dat youse is de kid what pushed dat table over on me toes. Do yer know dat I owe dat kid a lickin' for doin' dat t'ing to me, and if I ever ketch him I'm goin' to knock de stuffin' out of him."

"Then you don't believe I'm him?"

"Naw. Youse don't look not'in' like him. Yer must have met him and he told youse dat story. Mebbe he told youse dat he licked me, too. If he did youse kin tell him dat I said he was a liar."

Snorkey then walked on to the elevator. Sid chuckled and went on to deliver his note to Mr. Baker.

"I guess I have changed a good bit in three years and a half," he mused. "I was a hard-looking case the day Snorkey caught the table on his toes. It was a lucky thing after all that Bradshaw took me to Scarsdale. If he had left me behind in that house in —— Street I might never have seen Aunt Sarah again. I might be moulderin' in potter's field by this time, a victim of—but I don't want to think about what might have been if my luck hadn't turned. One thing is certain, that Bradshaw never could have made me a thief. I hope he's enjoying himself in Sing Sing. If he behaves himself there he'll get an allowance of three years and four months. That will make his term only six years and eight months, half of which he's already served. I wonder if he'll try to get square with me when he comes out? I also wonder what became of that chap named Jenkins? He was certainly a slick rooster. And a bad one, too, for I nearly died from the bullet he put into me. I'll bet I'd recognize him if I ever saw him again, that is, if he wasn't disguised."

Sid entered Mr. Baker's office and asked for that gentleman. The office boy said he was engaged.

"Well, you can take this note in to him, can't you?"

"Yes," said the boy, and he did it

Presently he came out again.

"Go in," he said to Sid. "Mr. Baker is writing an answer for you to take back."

So Sid entered the broker's private room. A stout, well-dressed man sat alongside Mr. Baker's desk. While the broker was scribbling off a reply for the young messenger to take back to Mr. Noble the stout man was talking to him. Sid heard him say:

"Well, you understand what we want now. Buy every share of S. & T. that you can pick up on the quiet and have them delivered C. O. D. at the Manhattan National."

Mr. Baker nodded as he folded the note, put it in an envelope and wrote Mr. Noble's name on it. Then he swung around in his chair as he heard Sid close the door and said:

"Here you are, young man," holding out the envelope.

Sid took it and bowed himself out of the room without a word.

"Buy every share of S. & T. that you can pick up on the quiet," he mused when he reached the corridor and walked toward the elevator. "That's what Mr. Baker's visitor said to him. That can mean only one thing, that a boom is under way in that stock. It looks like a fine pointer, and is the second I've got on to since I came to Wall Street. The first netted me a profit of \$2,500 on a hundred-share marginal deal. I've enough funds to buy 100 shares of any stock now. Suppose I went in on S. & T. to that extent, and it went up only ten points, I'd make \$7,000, and double my capital. I don't think it's a good plan to put all ones' eggs in one basket, though. Something might happen to queer this boom, and then I'd get it slap in the neck. The best laid schemes in Wall Street often go astray, and land many a big broker against the wall when he isn't expecting such a thing. I must consider this matter well before I get in on it, and not go in over my head, no matter how good it looks."

When Sid delivered Mr. Baker's note to his employer and returned to his seat in the reception-room he took the latest market report out of his pocket and looked up S. & T. He saw that it was ruling at 68. Then he consulted a hand-book of "past performances" in the stock market and noted the fact that S. & T. was below its normal standing.

"Of course there's a clique of traders behind this operation in S. & T., and it is more than probable that the low standing of the stock today is due to raids on it made to force it down as low as possible so that these men can buy it in at rock-bottom figures."

As there was no call on Sid for his services during the next twenty minutes he got hold of the market reports for the past two weeks. They showed a falling quotation right along in the stock.

"It's a wonder that I didn't notice this," he said to himself. "I have been making it my business to keep my optics on falling stocks, for those are the things to buy when they get down low. They are always bound to recover sooner or later when the market stiffens up, and a fellow stands to make a profit of from five to ten points in the shuffle. The trouble is that I'm kept so busy that I can't often avail myself of these chances. If I had all my time to myself I am sure I could make good money out of the market. There are lots of people who make a good living down here by

making it their business to follow the market every business day of their lives. Some of them have desk room in offices, and many carry their offices in their hats, as the saying is. If more of the lambs only worked on that principle they wouldn't go to the wall so often. Those innocents only seem to speculate by fits and starts. Instead of watching and buying a stock when it's way down they hold off till the stocks get booming in good earnest, and then they hold on for the last dollar and get caught in the slump when it sets in. Well, I suppose if it wasn't for the lambs business wouldn't be half so good in Wall Street. I guess all these booms, big and little, are gotten up to catch the money of the lambs. I heard Mr. Noble say that most of the money that comes to Wall Street stays here. At any rate there's lots of it here. It makes one's mouth water to look in at the windows of the money brokers' shops and see the piles that's strewed about. No wonder the New York financial district is called the money centre of the United States."

By the time Sid was done for the day he had decided to get in on S. & T., so on his way uptown he stopped in at the little bank on Nassau Street, which had put through his three former deals for him, and left an order for 500 shares of the stock, putting up a margin of \$5,000.

CHAPTER VII.—Sid Has a Run-in with Snorkey.

"Hello, Sid, what do you know?" asked a cheery voice as our young messenger walked into the messengers' entrance of the Stock Exchange next morning to deliver a note to Mr. Noble's representative on the floor.

"Oh, I know several things," replied Sid laughingly. "I know I'm alive for one."

"There's no doubt but you're alive—very much so," grinned Dick Trevor, who was waiting at the railing for one of the brokers to come up and get a note he had brought for him.

An A. D. T. boy leaning on the railing looked at him in a surly way. It was Snorkey, and he hadn't forgotten his encounter with Sid on the previous morning in the Vanderpool Building. He had been greatly puzzled over Sid's remarks about the table incident that had happened to him three years and a half ago. He couldn't understand how the broker's messenger came to know about the matter. His first idea was that Sid must have met the boy who had dumped the table against him on that occasion, and learned the facts from him. Yet that hardly seemed probable, for Sid didn't look like a boy who would be on speaking terms with boys from the slums. When he came to think the thing over after leaving the building he remembered that the boy whose escape he had prevented had suddenly disappeared from the slums.

He had not given the matter any particular thought before, but now his curiosity was piqued on the subject. He tried to recall the boy's name, but couldn't. He knew, however, that the lad had been living with Mother Scrooge, who still carried on her junk business in _____ Street. So that night he called on the old harridan, who hadn't changed much, unless for the worse, since Sid escaped her clutches. He asked about the boy

she had used as a slave in her den, and particularly desired to know his name. As the reader knows that Sid had caused the old woman's arrest, which resulted in her getting a six months' spell on the Island, in the East River, it was a sore subject for her to recall. The moment Snorkey brought the matter up she blazed into a fury and made the air of her shop blue with her imprecations. Finally the A. D. T. boy learned how Sid had caused the old woman's sequestration from _____ Street for six months, and that his name was Sid Fenton.

He also learned that Sid had been backed at the time by some rich man who pushed the case against her. That was all the harridan could tell him about the youth, but she said she would give a whole lot to get him into her clutches again, and intimated what she would do to him if she did. As Snorkey walked away from her shop he began to smell a large-sized mouse. The boy he had run against that day, and who had recalled the table incident, had not only said his name was Sid Fenton, but had intimated that he was the chap who had had the run-in with Snorkey on the occasion in question.

"It must be him after all," growled Snorkey. "He's run agin' luck, is dressed up like a dude, and puts on a big front like he was a swell cove all his life. I never would have known him. But I ain't forgot what I owe him. I'm goin' to knock de stuffin' out of him de fust chance I get."

Snorkey, as we have remarked, was leaning over the rail at the Exchange next morning when Sid arrived and was greeted by his friend Dick Trevor. A dark scowl came over his by no means handsome face when he saw that the newcomer was Sid Fenton. He was ready to pick a quarrel with the young messenger, believing that he could easily do him up, but he knew that the messengers' entrance was no place to have a scrap. Prudence, therefore, held him in check, and he contented himself with glaring savagely at Sid.

"Well, I'm feeling like a bird this morning," said Sid in reply to Dick's remark.

"You look it. What's happened that makes you feel so good?"

"I've got an idea that I'm going to make a bunch of money."

"How did the idea strike you?"

"That's a kind of business secret of mine."

"Business secret, eh? I never heard before that messenger boys have business secrets," chuckled Dick.

"Why shouldn't they have business secrets as well as anybody else?"

"Because they have enough to attend to without bothering with such things."

"Well, you see I can do two things at once sometimes."

"So you really imagine you see a chance to make a bunch of money?"

"I don't imagine it at all. I see the chance."

"I wish I saw such a chance."

"You might if you kept your eyes and ears wide open all the time."

"Do you think I'm asleep? I'd like to see the messenger who gets much chance down here to take forty winks."

"I don't say you're asleep, old man, but there are different ways of keeping awake. You know it's the early bird that gets the worm, so it's the

fellow who's on the alert who spears the opportunities as they pop up."

"I suppose that's as much as to say you have just speared an opportunity?"

"Yes; I speared it, all right."

"And you expect to make a bunch of money out of it?"

"That's about the size of it."

"I suppose you couldn't let a fellow in on your good thing?"

"Got any money?"

"I've got half a dollar."

"I mean have you any saved up?"

"Yes, I've got something over \$100 in bank."

"Buy ten shares of S. & T. right away and you'll be able to double it," said Sid in his ear.

"Buy ten shares of _____"

Sid choked him off by putting his hand on his mouth.

"I don't want you to yell out all I tell you," he said sharply. "You do as I say and you'll come out ahead. The pointer I've given you is a winner, and for that reason I want you to keep it quiet. Understand?"

Dick nodded. At that moment the persons came up for whom both boys had brought notes. The broker Snorkey was waiting for also came up, so the three lads left the Exchange in a bunch. As Sid stepped out of the door Snorkey put out his foot and tripped him up. The young messenger grabbed Dick by the arm and saved himself from a fall. Then he wheeled upon the tough youth.

"What did you do that for?" he demanded.

"Aw, forget it!" grinned Snorkey.

"Forget that, then," retorted Sid, slapping Snorkey in the jaw.

It was no gentle tap, and the tough messenger was hopping mad in a moment. He sprang at Sid with a howl of rage, intending to sweep up the sidewalk with him then and there. Sid eluded him by springing aside. Snorkey turned and went for him again.

"Hold on, there," cried Dick, grabbing him by the arm. "What's the matter with you? Want to get pulled in for scrapping on Broad Street?"

Snorkey was too mad to listen to reason. He shook Dick off with a back-handed clip in the face and lunged fiercely at Sid. Sid seized his wrist, gave it a twist that almost brought tears to his eyes, put his foot between Snorkey's legs and landed him deftly on the sidewalk. It was a kind of Japanese trick which done quickly would have laid a man out as well as Snorkey. Leaving the tough youth floundering on the sidewalk Sid and Dick passed on.

A few days later Sid noticed in the Wall Street reports that S. & T. shares had made a pretty rapid advance and that he was due for quite a sum of money if he sold out his 500 shares. But he determined to hold on. S. & T. kept going up until he thought it was likely to become top-heavy, so he stopped at the little bank on his way home and ordered his shares sold. He had made the sum of \$18,000 on his venture.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Abduction That Ended in a Smash-up.

Snorkey had it in for Sid Fenton for the layout he got in front of the Exchange. He told several of his cronies that he meant to do Sid up good

and hard. The cronies, who wanted to see the scrap, encouraged him to go ahead and do it. Being still confident of his ability to knock Sid's "block" off, he was constantly on the lookout for a chance to get at Sid. The opportunity, however, didn't seem to turn up. Snorkey was kept busy carrying messages from the Broad Street branch of the A. D. T. Company, and when he wasn't doing that he had to sit on a bench in the office. Then the chances were that if he ran against Sid on the street, and started a scrap, that he'd get pulled in, and he knew that his reputation with the police wasn't the best, which would make matters go hard with him before a magistrate. He tried to think of some way by which he might entice Sid to the neighborhood of _____ Street, but no likely plan suggested itself.

Finally he determined to learn where Sid lived.

To that end he got a member of his gang to come down to Wall Street and hang around until he or one of his cronies pointed Sid out to him. Then the young rascal had instructions to watch Sid when he left for home, and to follow him. It took a week to carry this scheme out, at the end of which time Snorkey found out where Sid lived in the Bronx. As soon as he had Sid's address he consulted with his gang about going up to the Bronx of a night, luring the young messenger from his flat, and then giving him a thundering good whipping.

The gang was willing to help him out if he'd pay transportation on the elevated road and stand treat afterward. As Snorkey's father, a tough citizen of the ward, took his son's pay envelope away from him every Saturday, the question of raising the necessary funds presented some difficulty. While Snorkey was cudgeling his brains to solve the problem it struck him that Mother Scrooge, who hated Sid, might be induced to help along a good cause with a couple of dollars.

With this idea in his head Snorkey went around to the junk shop to interview the old harridan. He found her sitting at the door of her place of business, smoking an old clay pipe, which was her constant companion. Snorkey lost no time in opening negotiations for the money.

"What d'ye take me for, a Vanderbilt?" croaked the old woman, who pretended to be poor, but wasn't by a very comfortable margin.

"It's worth a couple of cases, isn't it, to have that feller get a good lickin'?" said Snorkey persuasively.

"How'll I know yer won't be lyin' to me? You go and lick him, bring me proof of it and I'll give you the two plunks."

"We want the coin to pay our way up to de Bronx and back," explained Snorkey.

"How am I to know but ye're pulling me leg for some other purpose?" replied the old hag suspiciously.

"Can't yer take me word for it?" said the tough lad.

"I don't take nobody's word for nothin'," answered the woman, blowing a cloud of tobacco smoke.

Snorkey scratched his head and looked disappointed. He had exhausted his powers of persuasion. The harridan eyed him reflectively.

"If you and yer gang could kidnap Sid Fenton and bring him down here to me shop I'd be willin' to give yer twenty bones."

"We couldn't do nothin' widout two dollars," replied Snorkey sullenly.

"Yes, yer kin," said the old woman. "How many of yer friends kin yer depend on?"

"All of dem."

"How many is that?"

"Dere is five of dem besides meself."

"Kin yer have three of them here to-morrer night?"

"What for?"

"I'll have a cab here waitin' for yer. It will take you and yer friends up to where Sid Fenton lives. Get him out of his house, give him a tap on the head and put him into the cab. If yer get him down to me shop it's twenty bones in yer pocket. What yer say?"

"I'll take yer," replied Snorkey.

"I'll give yer a dose of drops which yer kin pour down his throat in the cab. That'll keep him quiet and yer won't have no trouble with him."

"What yer goin' to do wit' him after yer get yer flukes on him?" grinned the tough youth.

"Never mind what I'm goin' to do with him," said the woman, taking her pipe from her mouth and eyeing Snorkey darkly. "I've got an account to settle with him, that's been runnin' three years and more, and I'm goin' to settle it."

The time that Snorkey and his friends were to report at the junk-shop was arranged, and then the tough lad went away to fix the matter with the gang. About half-past eight o'clock on the following evening Sid Fenton was reading a story in a current issue of a well-known magazine to his aunt in the dining-room of their flat when the door-bell rang sharply.

"I wonder who that can be?" remarked Mrs. Harper, for they had few callers.

"Might be Dick Trevor come over to see me," said Sid.

He went into the kitchen and pushed the button. The bell rang again as sharply as before, and Sid pushed the button once more. In a moment or two the bell rang for the third time.

"I s'pose I'll have to run down and see who it is that's ringing our bell," he said to himself.

Downstairs he went and saw a tough-looking boy standing in the vestibule.

"Did you ring our bell?" asked Sid.

"Are youse Sid Fenton?" asked the other.

"That's my name. What do you want?"

"A gent wants to see yer in de cab."

"What cab?"

"Dere it is," replied the boy, pointing at the vehicle which stood in front of the next house.

"I guess you've made a mistake. Must be somebody else he wants."

"No. You said yer name is Sid Fenton, and dat's de name he said."

"Who is the gentleman?"

"Dunno. I think he said his name was Noble but I ain't sure."

The name of his employer seemed to assure Sid that there was no mistake, though he wondered greatly what the broker wanted to see him about. So he walked over to the cab. The boy who had rang his bell went with him and pulled the door open. At the same moment two more boys suddenly came from behind the vehicle.

The three gave Sid a push that landed him on his hands and knees in the cab. Before he could get up he received a crack on the head from a hard, blunt instrument that dazed him. Then he

was yanked into a sitting posture, his mouth pulled open and some kind of liquid poured down his throat. One of the boys entered the cab and pulled the door to after him.

The other two scrambled up on the seat beside the driver, who was one of the "Night Hawk" cabmen of New York. He whipped up his sorry-looking horse and the team started off downtown at a quick pace.

"Help me hold him down, Taffy, till de dope gets in its work," said the voice of Snorkey inside the cab.

"What yer want to hold him for? He ain't makin' no move," said the other. "Dat crack yer give him on de nut ought'r done de business."

"I dunno whether it did or not. I couldn't get a good swing at him. At any rate, I ain't takin' no chances wid him."

Sid, however, gave them very little trouble. By the time the effects of the blow he had received wore off the drug was overpowering him. He made a feeble struggle and then became unconscious.

"He's off safe enough," said Snorkey at length in a tone of satisfaction.

"Dat will be an easy twenty bones we'll make," grinned his companion.

"Bet yer life. Jest like findin' de money."

"What does de old woman want wid him?"

"Wants to git square wit' him 'cause he had her pinched t'ree year ago and sent to de Island."

"What'll she do to him?"

"Dunno, but I'll bet she'll make him mighty sick."

"Hope we don't git into no trouble over dis."

"We won't git into no trouble, don't yer worry."

"De perlice'll hunt for him."

"Dat ain't our funeral, Taffy. It's up to de old woman to look out for herself. She kept him for two year in her place oncet."

"He was only a kid den."

"S'pose she ties him up down in de cellar of de shop, how's he goin' to git out? I'll bet he won't show up in Wall Street in a hurry, and dat suits me, for I hate him."

While the boys were talking the cab rolled southward, and finally turned into Third Avenue. Down the avenue it went till it reached the bridge over the Harlem River. Crossing over to Manhattan it kept on along Third Avenue, passing block after block till Seventy-Second Street was reached. Then something happened.

A swiftly-driven automobile came up the cross street and struck the rear end of the cab, knocking it into a spinning heap. The frightened horse, which was unhurt by the collision, dragged the front end of the wreck down the street at a mad pace after the driver and the two boys had been spilled into the gutter. Snorky and Taffy were hurled, with the senseless Sid, into a demoralized heap yards away.

They staggered to their feet dazed and bleeding from many contusions. The cabman and the other two boys, who were only shaken up, rushed them into a nearby saloon just as the auto was brought back to the scene of the accident. Two gentlemen in the machine sprang out and looked blankly at the ruin of the cab. Then they spied the unconscious Sid, who was bleeding from a cut on the head.

They raised him up and put him into the car, then the chauffeur started up again at high speed

till Fifth Avenue was reached, down which they turned. Stopping in front of a fine brownstone residence the gentlemen lifted the boy out and carried him into the house, after instructing the colored chauffeur to go for a certain physician and bring him back with him at once.

CHAPTER IX.—Sid Learns About a Projected Corner in Erie.

When Sid came to his senses he was surprised to find himself lying on a lounge in an elegantly furnished square room. The gas was turned low and he was quite alone. Of course his first thought was one of astonishment at finding himself in such strange surroundings, and he wondered how he got there. The bandage around his head next attracted his notice, as well as the odor of liniment that came from it.

His head felt sore and ached him some. Then he remembered how he had been treated in the cab after having been decoyed to it, and he had a dim notion that his assailants were boys. At any rate it was a boy who induced him to go to the vehicle. He had lost consciousness in the cab and now here he was in a fine room, lying on a lounge with his head bound up.

The question that puzzled him was why had he been taken from his home and brought here? It was quite beyond him to find a solution to the problem. Finally he got up and walked to one of the two windows that were hung with rich lace curtains. Looking out into the night he saw a dim vista of private back yards. Then he walked to the door, expecting to find it locked, but it wasn't, and he stepped out on the third-floor landing, with the staircase before him.

"I thought I was being held a prisoner here for some reason, but apparently I am not. Take it all in all, this is a very singular affair."

He walked slowly down to the second landing. He intended to keep on down to the hall door and make his way out of the house if he could without attracting attention. As he was crossing the second landing he heard footsteps coming along the hall below, and as he thought the person might be on his way upstairs he opened the nearest door at hand and darted in. He found himself in the dark, but it was evidently a bedroom and about the same size as the one he had just left.

While he stood considering whether he should resume his way to the hall door or wait a while longer he thought he heard a murmur of voices. There were two doors in the room in addition to the one through which he had entered. He cautiously tried the one nearest to him and found that it opened on a large closet. The other was slightly ajar, and as Sid approached it he saw a dim gleam of light shining under it.

Pulling it open an inch or two he looked into a small passage between the room he was in and the front one. The sound of several men's voices came quite plainly to his ear. He opened the door wider and thrust his head into the passage. There was a door at the other end of it. It stood partly open, and a flood of light shone alone one side of the passage.

Sid was curious enough to make an effort to see who the men were in the other room. He might possibly learn why he had been brought to that

house. So he tiptoed over to the other door and glanced furtively into the room. Seven gentlemen attired in dress suits were sitting negligently around a large card table smoking and drinking. They had the air and general appearance of men of wealth.

Sid soon discovered from their conversation that they were Wall Street brokers. It wasn't many moments before he found that they had gathered together at this house for the purpose of arranging the final details of a big stock deal. They intended to form a corner in Erie, which was then selling at 40, and boom it up to 60, or even higher if they could. They expected to create a mighty sensation in the market, for Erie had been in the dumps for a long time, and nobody expected to see it reach even 50.

Sid stood at the door of the passage not a little surprised as well as excited by what he was learning. There was no doubt but he was getting hold of a valuable tip—the most valuable one by long odds that had yet come his way. The conference he was listening to was a secret one, convened at the home of the chief mover of the deal, who was the gentleman whose automobile had smashed the night hawk's cab, and thereby unconsciously rescued Sid from a tough fate.

The information Sid was acquiring was sufficient to have spoiled the plans of the syndicate of seven if he subsequently gave it away. Sid, however, never thought of giving anything away that came to his ears. His sole idea was to take advantage of it in bettering his own fortunes.

In the present case he saw the chance of making a whole lot of money by using this knowledge of the purposes of the seven brokers in making a deal on his own account. For the moment he forgot all about the singular and unexplained way by which he had come to be in that house, which was clearly the home of a rich man. All his thoughts were centered in hearing as much as he could about the Erie deal, and he heard about all that was worth hearing.

In fact, when the conference in the next room broke up he knew almost as much about the plans of the seven brokers as they did themselves. When he saw that the gentlemen were preparing to go he decided that he had better go first if he could make his way out of the house. He hurried back into the other room, reached the landing outside and tripped downstairs to the hall door. As he laid his hand on the night-latch to let himself out a well-dressed colored man rose from a chair where he had been sitting in the semi-gloom of the hall and coming forward caught the boy by the arm.

"Who are you?" he said sternly.

Then he pulled Sid back and turned up the hall light.

"Oh, you are the boy we picked up out of the wreck of the cab," he said on recognizing the lad's features.

"What do you mean?" asked Sid, puzzled by the remark, for, having been under the influence of knock-out drops at the time the accident happened he knew nothing about the smash-up at the corner of Third Avenue and Seventy-second Street.

"Don't you know what happened to the cab you were riding downtown in?" asked the negro, who was the chauffeur of the auto which had caused the trouble.

"No," replied Sid.

"I was driving Mr. Raynor and another gentleman up Seventy-second Street when a cab came down Third Avenue right in our path and we ran into it, knocking it all of a heap. When I slowed up and got back to the scene of the accident we found you lying in the midst of the wreckage unconscious. We picked you up and brought you here. Mr. Raynor sent for a doctor, who came and examined you. He said you had not been injured by the shock, as far as he could see, but that you appeared to be under the influence of some kind of drug. Mr. Raynor thought that singular, and decided to let you sleep off the effects of the drug and talk to you in the morning. You were left on the lounge in the third floor back room, where you found yourself when you came to your senses."

"I begin to understand matters now," replied Sid. "I couldn't make out why I was in that room, or this house. Is this Mr. Raynor's residence?"

"It is."

"Well, I'd like to go home, but I suppose I ought to see Mr. Raynor first if it is convenient."

"He certainly wants to see and talk to you before you leave the house," said the colored man. "He is at present engaged with a number of gentlemen on the floor above. He cannot be disturbed, as they are holding an important conference; but—"

The sound of several footsteps on the landing above interrupted the speaker.

"I guess you'll be able to see him now, as the gentlemen seem to be going home," added the negro chauffeur.

Downstairs came Mr. Raynor, preceding his six visitors.

"Hello!" he exclaimed on seeing Sid with his servant. "Is that the boy we brought here tonight?"

"Yes, sir," replied the colored man respectfully.

"How is it that he is down here?"

"He came downstairs and was trying to let himself out by the door when I saw and detained him, as I knew you wanted to talk to him."

"Quite right, William. I will see you in a moment, young man."

Each of the six gentlemen looked curiously at Sid as they passed out. They had heard the story of the collision of the auto and the cab from Mr. Raynor, and his statement that the boy's insensibility at the time he was picked up was due rather to the effects of a drug than to the accident. After the six gentlemen had departed Mr. Raynor turned to Sid.

"Well, young man, how do you feel?"

"Pretty fair, sir," replied Sid politely.

"May I ask your name?"

"Sid Fenton. I am a messenger for George Noble, stock broker, of No. — Wall Street.

"Indeed!" replied the gentleman in some surprise. "I am personally acquainted with Mr. Noble. My name is Edward Raynor, and I am a broker, too. I regret that my auto collided with the cab in which you were riding downtown this evening. We picked you up unconscious, brought you to my house and I had a doctor look you over. He said you had not received any injury through the smash-up, but he made the rather astonishing statement that you were under the influence of a drug. Can you throw any light on the matter?"

"A little, but not much," replied Sid, who them

proceeded to tell the broker how he had been summoned from his aunt's flat that evening to the entrance of the building where he found a rather tough-looking boy who told him that Mr. Noble was in a cab up beside the curb and wanted to see him.

"I could not imagine what brought my employer up to see me, as he never called on me before since I've been with him, a matter of three years and a half. However, I supposed it must be something of importance and I went to the door of the vehicle. As the door was pulled open I was suddenly pushed in with considerable force. Before I could recover I was struck on the head by something hard and I nearly lost my senses. While in that condition I now recollect that some kind of liquor was poured down my throat. As the cab started off I gradually became unconscious and that's all I remember till I came to myself upstairs."

Mr. Raynor listened to the boy's story in no little astonishment.

"There must have been an object in carrying you off in that high-handed way," said the broker. "You will, of course, notify the police and let them investigate it."

"I certainly shall, sir. I won't do anything, however, until I talk to Mr. Noble in the morning at the office."

Ten minutes later Sid left Mr. Raynor's house and started for Third Avenue to take a train for the Bronx at the Sixty-seventh Street station.

CHAPTER X.—Sid Saves the Life of Edith Holland.

When Sid failed to return within a reasonable time after going downstairs hatless, his aunt began to wonder what had become of him. She looked out of the window, but couldn't see him on the sidewalk. Finally she went down to the door, but her errand was fruitless. Hour after hour went by and she began to grow nervous. Midnight came and he was still away. By this time she was greatly worried and did not know what to do. She wouldn't go to bed because she knew she couldn't sleep. When two o'clock struck she was standing at the front window looking out. She saw a solitary figure coming up the street, and it turned in at the flat.

"Can that be Sid?" she asked herself, rushing out on the landing in the dark.

The figure came upstairs in the meagerly lighted hallway.

"Is that you, Sid?" she asked anxiously.

"Yes, aunt. It's me, all right. Worried about me?"

"I should say I have been. Where have you been, you naughty boy?" she asked as he reached her and grabbing her in his arms kissed her.

As soon as they entered their flat and locked the door Sid told her the story of his night's adventures. His aunt was both astonished and disturbed.

"You have enemies, Sid," she said. "Who can they be?"

"That's what puzzles me. I didn't know I had any, unless it is that Snorkey, who is an A. D. T. messenger now; but he couldn't work such a trick as that."

Sid and his aunt talked the puzzling question

over for some time, but they could not find an answer to the riddle. Next morning Sid laid the whole matter before Mr. Noble, and the broker communicated the facts to the police. The matter then rested until something developed. That afternoon Sid left an order with the little bank to buy 1,500 shares of Erie for him at the market. The shares were purchased next morning at 39. As it was Saturday the Exchange closed at noon, and Sid, with his week's wages in his pocket, was off at one o'clock. Instead of going to the Bronx he took a Broadway car uptown intending to buy a couple of theatre tickets for the evening, as he and Dick Trevor had arranged to take in a popular play. After getting the tickets he strolled across Times Square.

Suddenly there was a rattle of wheels and a rapid thud of horses' hoofs on the Belgian blocks. Quite a number of persons were crossing the square at that moment and there was a quick scampering for the shelter of the walk, for, rushing wild-eyed down the square, came the horses attached to a delivery wagon belonging to one of the big department stores. As Sid was about to follow the common example the team swerved to one side and dashed down upon a handsomely dressed girl who had just made an effort to reach the walk. She became so terrified at the sight of the runaways bearing down upon her at race-horse speed that she stopped short in helpless bewilderment.

She would have assuredly been run over and killed but for the prompt action of Sid, who rushed to her rescue, seized her about the waist, and swung her out of the path of the frantic animals just in the nick of time, and at no small peril to himself, for both of the rear wheels of the heavy wagon passed within an inch of his feet. More than a hundred passersby saw the plucky rescue, and in a moment after the danger was over he and the girl were surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd. Sid led the dazed girl to the sidewalk, the growing mob giving way reluctantly to let them pass, and then following at their heels.

As they stopped on the sidewalk the crowd swarmed around them thicker than before, attracting the attention of a policeman, who pushed his way forward to find out what was the matter. Sid in the meanwhile was trying to lead the embarrassed and grateful girl out of the focus of eyes that persisted in staring them both out of countenance. He aimed for a nearby store, but before they reached the doorway the officer caught up with them. Out came his notebook and down went the few brief particulars that Sid furnished him with, including his name and address.

"And what's your name, miss?" asked the policeman.

"Edith Holland," she replied.

"Where do you live?"

"At the Bristol Hotel, with my aunt."

The officer closed his book and ordered the crowd to disperse. In a few minutes it melted away, and, much to their relief, Sid and Miss Holland were left by themselves.

"I am very, very grateful to you, Mr. Fenton," said the girl earnestly. "I am sure you saved my life."

"I won't say I didn't, for you stood right in the path of the team. I am glad I was able to be of service to you, Miss Holland, and now that you have no longer any need for my services, unl."

you wish me to escort you to your hotel, I will wish you good-afternoon."

"I should be glad to have you go with me as far as the Bristol, if it isn't taking you out of your way," she said sweetly.

"It will not take me out of my way, as I'm not bound for any place in particular. It will be a pleasure for me to accompany you there."

By the time they reached the hotel, which was only about seven blocks away, Sid and Edith Holland were on exceedingly friendly terms.

"You must come upstairs and let me introduce you to my aunt. She will want to thank you for what you did for me," said Edith.

Sid consented to go to their suite, not because he wanted to receive the thanks of the girl's aunt, but because he thought it might open the way for him to meet the young lady again. After introducing Sid to Mrs. Carlton, her aunt, Edith went on to explain how the boy had gallantly saved her life at Times Square at considerable personal risk to himself. Of course Mrs. Carlton expressed her grateful appreciation for his conduct, and the short visit wound up with an invitation to call on them some evening soon. Sid promised to do so, and took his leave, feeling satisfied that Edith Holland was the nicest girl he had ever met in his life. When Sid met Dick that evening preparatory to going to the theatre he told his friend of the incident in which he had figured in Times Square.

"Your name will be in all the morning papers," said Dick. "In fact, the story ought to be in the later editions of the evening papers. We must buy one and see if it is. Is Miss Holland pretty?"

"Bet your life; she's pretty as a picture," replied Sid enthusiastically.

"Her aunt must be well off to be able to maintain a suite rooms at a nice hotel like the Bristol."

"They dress as if they were not in any urgent need of money," answered Sid.

"I suppose you'll cultivate their acquaintance."

"I will if I can."

"You ought to have no difficulty in doing so after saving the young lady's life. I should imagine that would make you pretty solid with them both."

They didn't buy an evening paper till they came out of the theater after the show. Scanning the news columns they found the Times Square incident boiled down to a paragraph, but it had Sid's name in, and Edith's, too, quite correctly.

"Well," said Dick, a bit enviously, "maybe I'll do something big myself some day and get my name in the paper, too."

"Sure," chuckled Sid, as they walked up the elevated stairs together.

On Monday Erie went down half a point.

"It will have to go as low as 30 to put me on the danger line," said Sid to himself; "and I don't believe it will go anywhere near that."

On Wednesday evening he called on Edith Holland and her aunt at the Bristol. During the evening he told them about his various stock deals, and how from a start with \$1,000 he had made \$17,000 more. They thought he was unusually smart as well as fortunate. Then he told them that he had a sure tip on Erie, and had bought 1,500 shares in expectation of the boom which he was confident was coming off pretty soon.

"The syndicate that's cornering the stock ex-

pacts to raise it to 60, at any rate," he said. "That offers me the chance of making a profit of \$20 a share, or \$30,000 altogether. That will raise my capital to nearly \$50,000."

"Couldn't you buy me some shares of Erie, too?" asked Edith, with sparkling eyes.

"I guess I could manage it all right. One hundred shares would cost you in margin \$1,000," he said.

"And 1,000 shares would cost me \$10,000, wouldn't it?"

"Yes. The margin is always \$10 on a share. Of course you get it back along with your profit if the price goes up and you sell out in time, less commission and interest on the money advanced by the broker to put the deal through for you."

Sid explained the method of buying and selling stocks on margin, and Edith told her aunt that she'd like to buy 1,000 shares of Erie, and see if she couldn't make a good thing out of it as Sid expected to do himself.

Mrs. Carlton seemed doubtful about letting her niece risk so much of her money.

"Oh, I've got plenty," replied the girl, a bit independently. "I can afford to take the chances."

The result was when Sid left the hotel he carried away in his pocket a check for \$10,000 made out to his order and signed by Mrs. Carlton.

Next day he bought the 1,000 shares for Edith at 39, and notified her by letter of the fact.

CHAPTER XI.—Sid Decides to Start Out for Himself With a Fair Partner.

Toward the end of the week Erie began creeping up a little at a time, and when it reached 45 the brokers began to notice that something was doing in it. There was a great deal of business done in the stock and the price fluctuated up and down all day Friday, closing at 42.

Next morning Broker Raynor met Sid on the street and stopped him.

"Found out anything about the persons who tried to kidnap you?" he asked the boy.

"No, sir; not a thing. Mr. Noble turned the case over to the police, but I haven't heard that they've made any discoveries."

"It's funny that you haven't the least idea who put the job up on you," said the broker. "You ought to know if you have any particular enemies."

"The only enemies I could have that I know of are the friends of the crooks I helped send to Sing Sing three years and a half ago. They would hardly have waited so long to get square with me. There's an old woman who keeps a junk store on _____ Street. She did me a lot of injury before I came to work down here. I had her sent to the Island, though in my opinion she ought to have been put away in the penitentiary for women. I dare say she's still down on me like a cartload of bricks. But I don't see how she could be mixed up in the cab affair. If she was going to do anything like that I should think she'd have done it as soon as she got off the Island."

"Have you given your suspicions to the police?"

"I believe Mr. Noble, who is familiar with what I was up against before I came to work for him, gave them all the particulars."

"I should think they ought to have found out something by this time, then."

"I've heard that Mother Scrooge, that's the old woman's name, has a big pull with the politicians in her ward. I imagine that's how she got off with a light sentence on the Island."

The broker nodded, as if he agreed with Sid, and then went on his way. That day when the Exchange closed at noon Erie was up to 43.

Sid had a date that afternoon with Edith Holland to take her to a matinee performance of a play that was having a long run, so after his lunch he went directly to her hotel where he found her, in a new gown, waiting for him.

"Well," he said as they were on the way to the theater, "you're \$4,000 and I'm \$6,000 ahead on Erie so far."

"Isn't that splendid!" she exclaimed. "It's just like finding money to deal in Wall Street stocks."

"It is if you're lucky; but if the market goes against you you can lose money quicker down there than anywhere else I know of."

"But you haven't lost any yet."

"That's because I was born lucky, I guess."

"I think I must have been born lucky, too, because I've been fortunate all my life so far. Papa left me a lot of money in trust which will come to me when I get to be twenty-one."

"It isn't every young lady who is as fortunate as you to have plenty of money left to her. I suppose your aunt is your guardian."

"Yes. She has charge of all my business matters."

"Suppose you make \$10,000 or \$15,000 out of this Erie deal, what are you going to do with all that money?"

"I'll let my aunt have charge of it, for I'm not so extravagant as to want to spend it foolishly."

"If I make as good a haul as I expect, I'm thinking of going into business on my own hook."

"Are you?"

"Yes. I'll hire an office, and devote all my time and attention to the market. How would you like to go in partnership with me?"

"I'd like to first-rate, if aunt would let me. Really, I have nothing to do but try to amuse myself all day. I'd like to have something more important than that on my hands."

"Well, we'll speak about the matter after we see how we come out on this deal."

During the next week Erie went up to 50, and there was much excitement in the Exchange in consequence, just as Sid had heard the seven brokers say there would be. He was more than ever satisfied that he was going to make a good thing out of his Erie transaction, and, of course, if he was successful Edith Holland would make a good-sized wad, also.

The lambs, when they read that Erie was booming, came hustling down to the Street to put their fingers in the pie. They brought their wads, great and small, and put them up like little veterans.

Erie opened at 52 on the following Monday morning and there was excitement to burn, especially when the news leaked out that a big syndicate had cornered the stock and intended to boom it out of sight.

On Wednesday the price was up to 60, and that was the figure Sid had decided to sell at. He didn't have a chance to leave his order with the little bank till he got off for the day, then he told the margin clerk to sell his shares and Edith's first thing in the morning. The stock had closed at 61 1-2 and it opened at 62 5-8, at which price the stock was sold. When Sid got the two statements that afternoon and the two checks, he found that he had made \$35,000, and that Edith had captured a profit of \$23,000. Before going home he enclosed Edith's statement and check in an envelope and sent it to her hotel by special messenger, telling her how much he had made himself. He got a note from her next day thanking him for helping her make so much, and telling him that, with her aunt's consent, she was ready to go into partnership with him to the extent of the \$23,000, or even more, if necessary, and asking him to come up soon and talk the matter over with her and her aunt.

He called on her Friday night, and the result of the interview was that they were to form an even partnership, each putting in \$50,000 for speculative purposes. On the strength of that Sid next day resigned his messenger job, much to Mr. Noble's astonishment, who wanted to know the reason of it. Sid told him frankly that he could make more money in Wall Street on his own hook than by working for any broker. He told the broker about his five deals from which he had cleared \$53,000, and he also told him that he and a wealthy young lady were going into partnership with a combined capital of \$100,000. Mr. Noble smiled and told him that he thought he and the young lady were very foolish to risk their money on such a game of chance as Wall Street held out, notwithstanding the success which had so far followed his efforts. Sid said he was willing to take the chances, and he guessed he'd get along all right; if he didn't it was his own funeral, and nobody would hear him squeal if he came out at the short end of the horn.

"Well, my boy, if you're determined to go ahead there is no use of me trying to dissuade you. Experience is the best teacher, though it is often a dear one. I intended to promote you to my counting-room, and was thinking of getting another messenger. If you find after a trial that your plan of going it alone doesn't work my offer is open to you to come back and take a desk in my counting-room at any time."

"Thank you, Mr. Noble," replied Sid.

"That's all right, my boy. You have worked faithfully as a messenger since you have been with me, and I have never had the slightest fault to find with you. I told your aunt I would look after your future, but since you are taking the matter out of my hands, all I can hope is that you may make a success of your venture. Owing to your youth and inexperience the result looks doubtful to me. I think you would show better judgment by remaining with me and letting me invest your money at good interest. Then it would be safe. However, you are the doctor. Don't forget that I shall always be your good friend, and if I can help you in any way while you are out for yourself don't fail to call on me."

Sid promised that he would, and on the following Monday began his last week with Mr. Noble as his messenger.

CHAPTER XII.—“Fenton & Holland, Stocks and Bonds.”

On the Monday morning following his severance of business relations with Mr. Noble Sid started out office hunting. It took him several days before he found a suitable single room that would answer his purpose. He furnished it up in good shape, and put in a safe, a ticker and a telephone. Although Edith was to be a regular partner, he did not expect her to take an active participation in the business. She insisted on being allowed to come down every day and make herself as useful as possible, as she said she was tired of doing nothing but trying to amuse herself all day long. Sid said he would be delighted to have her come down every day, and told her she could stay in the office, if she liked, when he was out at the Exchange and elsewhere. As a matter of fact he liked to have her around him, for he was already more than half in love with her, and he thought the more they saw of each other the closer their relationship would become. As soon as he had the office ready for occupation he hired a sign painter to put the firm name on the door as follows:

FENTON & HOLLAND.
Stocks and Bonds.

When he looked at the legend after the painter had finished his work he said:

“That looks fine. No one will suppose that one of the firm is a girl. If that fact leaked out among the brokers I bet I’d have them trooping up here in squads to make Miss Holland’s acquaintance, and if some of the younger men suspected she had much money they would try to make love to her, and perhaps some shrewd chap might cut me out and walk off with my partner, money and all, and then where would I be at?”

Sid chuckled at the idea of such a thing, though he didn’t think it funny at all. That evening Sid called at the Hotel Bristol and told Edith that the office was all ready for her inspection.

“That’s lovely!” she exclaimed, clapping her hands. “Aunt and I will be down tomorrow.”

“Here is our card,” said Sid, fishing out a small package of bristols and handing them to her.

“Oh, my! ‘Fenton & Holland, Stocks and Bonds, No. — Wall Street, New York.’ I must show that to auntie at once.”

She rushed into an adjoining room and was gone several minutes.

“Auntie says I’m a regular broker,” she said laughingly when she returned.

“Sure you are.”

“I suppose I’ll have to come down every day.”

“Not unless you want to, as you’re not exactly an active partner; but I’ll be glad to have you come if you will. I bought a small desk for you, and you can bring a book and read if I’ve nothing for you to do. At any rate, it will be handy to have you around to watch the office when I’m out.”

Sid stayed till half-past ten that evening. When he went home he was more interested in Edith than ever. About eleven next morning while Sid was reading a Wall Street daily there came a tap at the door.

“Come in,” called out the young broker, and in walked Edith and her aunt.

“What a nice office you’ve got!” cried the girl delightedly.

“You mean we’ve got,” corrected Sid.

“I can’t seem to realize that I’m really a partner in a regular business,” she replied.

“Oh, you’ll get used to the sensation after a while,” laughed Sid.

“I’ve always been so utterly useless that I must try to make amends by being real useful now.”

“That’s right. I’ll try to find something to keep you out of mischief.”

“That’s real good of you. I’m ready to begin right away. Is that my desk?”

“Yes.”

“Now, auntie, you’ll have to go back to the hotel alone. I’ve got to remain and attend to business.”

“Don’t you want to go over and see the bulls and bears, both of you?”

“You mean the Stock Exchange, don’t you?” said Edith.

“That’s what I mean. I’ll take you into the visitors’ gallery.”

The ladies said they would be delighted to go, so Sid closed up the office and took them to the Exchange. They spent nearly an hour in the gallery looking down at the traders who were howling and shaking their fists, generally with two fingers pointed forward, at one another, and occasionally making memorandums on their tabs and exchanging them among themselves. Edith and her aunt were much interested in all that they saw at the Exchange, and thanked Sid for bringing them there. It was half-past twelve when they left, and then Sid invited them to lunch with him. They accepted and the young broker took them to a nice restaurant on Beaver Street, where they spent another hour over their lunch, after which Mrs. Carlton took a Broadway car uptown while Edith accompanied Sid back to the office. Next morning Edith was down promptly at ten, Sid having told her that her office hours would be from ten to three, and the young broker, leaving her in charge of the office, went over to the gallery of the Exchange to see if anything of moment was happening. While he was out Mr. Noble, accompanied by another broker, dropped in to see Sid.

“Mr. Fenton went over to the Exchange,” said Edith in answer to their inquiry. “Will you leave your names, gentlemen?”

“Mine is Noble. I am Sid’s late employer. I came in to see how he was fixed. He seems to have quite a nice office. Are you Miss Holland?”

Edith admitted that she was.

Mr. Noble then wished her good-by and he and his friend took their leave. The gentleman who had entered with Mr. Noble was a broker, and he spread the news around that the new firm of Fenton & Holland was composed of Broker Noble’s late messenger and a fine-looking young lady whose life he had saved. He dilated so much on the young lady’s charms that every trader he spoke to on the subject became exceedingly curious to see the fair young brokeress, as Mr. Noble’s friend laughingly called her. A little after three several brokers headed for Sid’s office. When they entered Edith had just gone home. One of them knew Sid pretty well.

"Hello, Fenton!" he said. "Gone into business for yourself?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, your sheep-shearing den seems to be right up to date."

"Yes, sir. I try to keep abreast of the times."

"Let me make you acquainted with Mr. Black and Mr. Greene, members of the Exchange. Gentlemen, this is Sid Fenton, Noble's late messenger."

"Pleased to know you, gentlemen," said Sid.

"By the way, where's your partner?"

"Gone home."

"That's too bad. We came up here expressly to see her."

"Her!" exclaimed Sid.

"Certainly. We understand that you have a very charming young lady for a partner."

"Who told you that?"

"Mr. Fosdick. You know him, don't you?"

"No, I haven't the honor. How did he come by the information?"

"He was up here this morning with Noble."

"Oh!" ejaculated Sid.

"I think you will find that the Street will show considerable interest in this fair partner of yours. Brokers are rather susceptible to youth and beauty. When is she on exhibition?"

"She isn't on exhibition at all, Mr. Prince," replied Sid, a little bit annoyed. "When she's here she's here on business, same as any broker in his own office."

"Of course, we understand that," laughed Broker Prince, while the others chuckled. "You needn't be surprised, however, if this office becomes the Mecca for half the brokers on the Street. I know of a dozen who are very anxious to see Miss Holland."

"Miss Holland, I guess, will not care to become the focus of Wall Street curiosity," answered Sid.

"If she's as handsome and stylish as I have heard she is I don't see how she can avoid attracting considerable attention."

"I believe there's no law to prevent brokers or anybody else from admiring her on the street if they want to, but that right does not extend to a levee in this office," replied Sid in a tone that showed he was decidedly opposed to such a thing.

Broker Prince thought it advisable to change the subject, and after trying to pump Sid about what he intended to do, he and his friends said good-day and left the office.

CHAPTER XIII.—In Which Sid Secures Both a Tip and a Pointer, and Also Makes a Contract for Life.

Edith was down on time next morning with a new novel to engage her attention while Sid was out. Half a dozen traders, who had known Sid simply as Mr. Noble's messenger, stopped him one after another on the sidewalk as he was walking toward the Exchange, to ask him why he had set up for himself, what he expected to make out of it, and where he had picked up his partner. For several days Wall Street seemed to be greatly interested in Edith Holland, then other matters diverted attention away from her. When Sid and the girl were together in the office he instructed her in the ins and outs of the financial district as

far as he was acquainted with them, and made her wise to many things that were new and strange to her.

Thus a month passed away and the firm had not as yet made a dollar. One day about three o'clock Sid had occasion to visit a trader in the Atlas Building, where Mr. Raynor, the broker who lived on Fifth Avenue, had his office. As he came out in the corridor he saw six gentlemen attired in Prince Albert coats and silk hats come from the direction of the elevator and enter Raynor's office. Sid recognized them as the men he had seen in Mr. Raynor's home the night he was brought there unconscious after the accident at Seventy-second Street and Third Avenue. These gentlemen, with Mr. Raynor, comprised the syndicate that had so successfully boomed Erie, and probably made a mint of money out of the corner.

Sid, as he looked at them file into Mr. Raynor's office, wonderful if there was a new deal on the tapis in which these wealthy men were interested. However, there didn't seem to be any probability of Sid ever getting on to the plans of Raynor and his friends a second time, so he returned to his office. Two days later a sudden flurry of rain drove Sid into the open portal of the Jupiter Building on Broad Street.

The portico of the skyscraper was formed of six great granite pillars, three on either side of the entrance. Sid took refuge between two of them, and presently two gentlemen in silk hats and Prince Albert coats came out of the building, and not being provided with umbrellas, they did not venture to face the rain. As several persons stood around the entrance the two gentlemen in question moved over into the space between the middle and inner pillars. Sid was standing between the middle and outer one, leaning against the former. In this position the voices of the two gentlemen, who were carrying on a conversation, reached him.

"We are to meet again at Raynor's at five today, remember," said one of them in a hoarse voice as if he had a cold.

"I haven't forgotten that fact, Yardley," said the other. "I'm not likely to hold aloof when this new deal promises to eclipse the Erie coup."

"Raynor figures that we ought to land a million and a half each time. H. & O. is 'way down, owing to the late operations of the Busby clique, which sold it short to the extent of millions, and they must have made a fine rake-off out of the matter. Raynor sees the chance for us to jump right in and corner the stock at rock-bottom figures just as we did in Erie. Then when the control of the bulk of the shares is in our hands, we will be in a position to boom it thirty points or even more. This afternoon's meeting is, as you are aware, to arrange the final details and put up our checks for a million each to see the game through. As H. & O. is liable to recover at any time it will be necessary to begin buying right away, and we can't be too quiet about it if we're to rake in all the cream."

"Mrs. Curtis Fairfax, of Fairfax Lodge, West Brighton, has 15,000 shares that she's been anxious to get rid of since the slump in its price. Its market value today is 59 1-8. We could afford to offer her 60, taking a fifteen-day option on the stock by putting up 10 per cent. of the purchase price, which would be \$90,000."

"Would she sell on the option basis?"

"Leave that to me, Yardley. She's an old lady, and \$90,000 spot cash will have considerable attraction for her under the present wobbly condition of the market."

"Then I suppose you will make it your business to see the old lady tomorrow?"

"Yes; tomorrow afternoon early. I shall suggest to Raynor to engineer a few wash sales in the morning to get a lower quotation than 59. That may frighten the old lady into making the deal with me right off the reel."

"A good idea, Windom. Well, let's get on. It's let up raining, I see."

The two brokers stepped onto the sidewalk, and Sid easily recognized them as two of the Raynor clique. He waited till they had gone some yards and then he stepped from between the pillars himself and started for his office.

"Well, talk about luck!" he muttered. "To think I should get on to the plans of the Raynor clique in such a simple way. So they're going to boom H. & O. this time. And I wager they can do it all right if anybody can. Men who can put up their checks for a million, as they're going to do this afternoon at the meeting, have the sinews of war at their fingers' ends. This is where the new firm of Fenton & Holland is going to make a quarter of a million, or I don't know what I'm talking about. If Edith and I stick together I'll wager we'll be worth a million one of these days. As I'm the individual who is really making the money I must manage to marry her, if I can, so as to keep it in the family."

When he reached the office he told Edith what he had overheard, and laid out before her all the advantages the tip promised for them.

"I'm going to steal a march on the Raynor clique by going to West Brighton tomorrow morning with \$90,000 in my pocket and try to purchase a fifteen-day option on her 15,000 shares. That's far better than putting up \$100,000, our whole capital, at a broker's in order to have him buy us 10,000 shares. Of course we're taking a considerable risk, for if the boom shouldn't go through inside of the fortnight we stand to lose our \$90,000, for we couldn't raise anything like \$810,000 to complete the purchase of the shares. Our course of action, if things go right, will be to sell the option as soon as the boom is well on. I figure that the rise will be at least twenty points. Should we sell at a fifteen-point advance we would make nearly a quarter of a million."

"My gracious!" exclaimed Edith. "What a lot of money!"

"Yes, it is a lot when you say it slow. It would make our firm well off. You could buy a few imported gowns and hats if you wanted to and not miss the cost."

"Aunt will be simply—"

"You mustn't say a word to your aunt about this matter until the deal has gone through. Absolute secrecy is essential to success in Wall Street operations. Don't forget that. I am sure you can keep a secret when it is necessary for you to do so."

"Yes, I think I can," she answered laughingly.

"I suppose you like the idea of making big money," he said.

"Like it! I should think I do. It seems to me that you are the one who is really making it. I'm just a figurehead. I don't think I'm entitled to

half the profits. I shall feel as if I'm robbing you."

"Nonsense! I am just as much interested in making money for you as for myself."

"You're awfully good to say that," she said, flashing a glance at him which sets his heart bumping against his ribs.

"Well, if you can keep another secret I'll tell you," he said, pushing his chair nearer to her.

"I'll try to," she replied archly.

"You've robbed me of the most important thing I possess."

"I am sure I don't understand you, Sid."

"I might as well tell you now what it is as at any other time. You've robbed me of my heart."

She looked down at the rug and was silent.

"We are business partners with every chance of making a go of it. I like you so well as a partner that I want to make it a life contract. What do you say, Edith? Do you think enough of me to agree to that, or don't you?"

Sid was a game boy in love as he was in business and everything else. He was encouraged to see that Edith made no effort to withdraw herself from his partial embrace. He pressed her closer to him and raised her blushing face to his.

"Is it yes or no, dear?"

"Yes," she replied softly.

Before she could hide her face on his shoulder he had captured her lips, and the contract for life was sealed then and there.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Masked Seven.

At ten o'clock next morning Sid started for West Brighton, Staten Island, with \$90,000 in big bills in his pocket. He was bound for Fairfax Lodge to interview old Mrs. Curtis Fairfax about her 15,000 shares of H. & O. stock which he was anxious to secure a fifteen-day option on, which he calculated would be long enough for his purpose. He landed at the ferry dock at St. George at half-past ten and caught a trolley car for West Brighton. The conductor was able to direct him to the residence of Mrs. Fairfax, who was very well known at that end of the island. She lived in an elegant villa in the suburbs, and Sid had no difficulty in finding the place. The big iron gate forming the main entrance was closed and locked, and Sid had to push a button in one of the posts to attract attention. A man, who looked like a gardener, came out of a small lodge and asked Sid what he wanted.

"I have called to see Mrs. Curtis Fairfax on business. I represent the firm of Fenton & Holland, No. — Wall Street. Here is our business card," and Sid passed it through the bars to him.

The man, satisfied of the boy's respectability, and thinking probably that his mistress had business relations with the Wall Street firm, admitted Sid, and he went to the front door and rang the bell. He handed his business card to the maid who answered the ring, and told her to tell Mrs. Fairfax that Mr. Sidney Fenton wished to see her on business. She ushered Sid into the parlor on the ground floor and carried the card and the message upstairs. She returned presently and told Sid to follow her. She led him up to a very comfortable sitting-room on the second floor where he found the lady of the house seated in an arm-chair by one of the windows. Mrs. Fairfax was a prim

old lady with white hair, and Sid judged her age to be over 70.

"Mrs. Fairfax?" said Sid, advancing, hat in hand.

"Yes," she replied, looking at him inquiringly. "I understand that you have 15,000 shares of H. & O. stock that you are thinking of selling," began Sid.

"How did you learn that?" she asked, apparently surprised.

"Through a broker, whose name I am not familiar with."

"Well?" she said.

"The latest quotation this morning is 59. I can offer you 60, however, provided you are willing to sell the stock on a fifteen-day option basis. I am prepared to deposit \$90,000 in cash in your hands as a guarantee that I will call or send for the shares within fifteen days from this date, in default of my doing so the deposit becomes yours, and I will lose all claim on the stock."

The old lady was not at first disposed to accept Sid's proposition, but after they had talked the matter over she consented, much to the boy's satisfaction. The option was drawn up and signed by the old lady, Sid paid over the money and took a receipt for it, and then the business being finished he bade Mrs. Fairfax good-morning and departed. When he reached the ferry a boat from New York was just coming in. Among the passengers who walked ashore Sid recognized the broker of the Raynor clique, who was evidently on his way to call on Mrs. Fairfax about the H. & O. shares. Sid chuckled, for he knew the gentleman was doomed to disappointment. About three o'clock that afternoon, a few minutes after Edith had taken her departure for the day, Broker Raynor walked into Sid's office.

"How do you do, Mr. Raynor?" said Sid politely. "Take a seat."

"I am looking for some H. & O. stock," said the broker, coming right to the point. "Have you any for sale?"

"No, sir."

"Isn't it a fact that you bought an option on 15,000 shares of H. & O. this morning from Mrs. Curtis Fairfax, of West Brighton?"

"Yes, sir. I see no reason for denying the fact."

"You took the option out in your own name."

"I did."

"You paid 60 for the option. Very well. I am ready to take the option off the hands of whoever you bought it for at an advance of three points on what you gave for it. I suppose you couldn't give me an answer now?"

"The option is not for sale at present."

"I will raise my bid another point. I will give you my check for \$150,000—covering the \$90,000 you advanced as security, and \$60,000 profit."

"I shall have to decline your offer, Mr. Raynor."

"All right," snapped the broker, getting up. "If you should change your mind between this time and tomorrow at the same hour let me know. My offer stands good for that time."

Next day at three o'clock a messenger came into Sid's office and handed him an envelope. It contained a note from Mr. Raynor asking if Sid had a favorable reply to send him with reference to the option on H. & O. Sid returned the same answer as he had given him personally the day previous. H. & O. had closed that afternoon at

60 3-8, and the young broker was encouraged to believe that things were coming his way. Four days passed and H. & O. still hovered around 60. Sid hung around the Exchange gallery, and he noticed whenever H. & O. made a slight spurt upward that there were brokers ready at hand to jump on it and keep it down to the old figures. He guessed that was the work of the Raynor clique, who wanted to prevent the price from going up while they were buying in the stock. When Sid returned from the Exchange on the afternoon of the sixth day from the time he had purchased the option Edith handed him an envelope addressed to him which she said had been left by a messenger while he was out. It ran as follows:

"Mr. Fenton: I will call on you at your office this afternoon at 4:30 on business of importance. Will you kindly wait for me? Yours truly,

"G. Blackington."

He showed the note to Edith, and she said she would keep him company until four o'clock, which she did. At half-past four exactly a knock came at his door.

"Come in," said Sid.

The door opened and seven men dressed in silk hats and Prince Albert coats filed solemnly into the office. The young broker was at no loss to identify them as the Raynor clique, though to his amazement each man's features were hidden by a full black mask, similar to those worn at masquerades. The men looked so nearly alike that Sid could not tell which one was Raynor. Three of the seven took their stand on one side of his desk, and three on the other, maintaining solemn silence. The seventh man walked up close beside Sid, and before the boy knew what was coming the masked gentleman had pinioned his body and his left arm to the chair in which he sat.

"What does this mean?" demanded Sid in a burst of indignation.

He had no chance to say anything more, for the man quickly tied a silk handkerchief around his mouth, effectually gagging him. Sid could not understand the meaning of this outrage on the part of his visitors. He soon learned the object of it all. The man who had bound and gagged him drew from an inside pocket a paper containing some writing.

"Read!" said the man laconically.

Sid read it. It was an order on Mrs. Curtis Fairfax to deliver to the bearer, on presentation of a certified check for \$810,000, the 15,000 shares of H. & O. stock. After Sid had read it the man spread it out on Sid's writing-pad. Then he took from his pocket a packet of bills marked \$150,000 which he laid upon the desk in front of the young broker, into whose right hand he forced a penholder.

"Sign!" exclaimed the masked leader menacingly, pointing at the paper.

"Sign!" exclaimed the six disguised brokers in sepulchral tones, making a similar movement toward the document.

Bound, save his right arm, and gagged, what could Sid Fenton do?

CHAPTER XVI.—Conclusion.

Sid looked at the six masked men with their outstretched arms and pointed fingers, and then at the seventh who bent above him with one hand

on his chair. Apparently they meant business, and figured on frightening him into compliance with the purpose they had in view. But they didn't count on the fact that Sid was something more than an ordinary lad—that he couldn't be forced into doing something he was opposed to. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink is an old saying. Sid, as we have already shown, was a game boy. His pluck and gameness came to the surface when he was driven into a corner. Throwing down the pen Sid showed that he refused to sign. The masked men made a threatening movement, and the boy could see their eyes flash behind the slits in their masks.

"Sign!" hissed the leader, in a fierce tone.

Sid raised his unconfined hand to his face and tore the handkerchief away from his mouth.

"I will not," he said stoutly. "I know you. You are the Raynor syndicate who are backing H. & O., and you think to freeze me out. You can't do it. I'm going to hold on to the 15,000 shares in spite of you."

His words created something of a sensation. The seven men were clearly disconcerted.

"I am not as easily intimidated as you thought, gentlemen," went on Sid. "It won't pay you to push this matter any further. Better let me in with you on this deal to the extent of my 15,000 shares, and let it go at that. I give you my word that no one shall learn your plans from me. Attempt to push me to the wall and I will expose the facts to the corner you are trying to secure in H. & O., even though it cost me the \$90,000 I have invested in the stock."

"Where did you get the money to buy it with?"

"That is really none of your business; but I am willing to be frank with you. My partner, Miss Holland, and myself have a capital of \$100,000 between us. I may also say that she's worth a quarter of a million besides, and every cent of it will be used to protect this option. If I went to Mr. Noble, my former employer, he would back me to the extent of his means after I told him how the situation stands. So you see, gentlemen, that on the whole I have nothing to fear from you though you have seven million up, with more no doubt behind."

"How in thunder did you learn that we had seven million up, that we are what you call the Raynor syndicate, and that we are trying to corner H. & O.?"

"I got on to the facts through a conversation I overheard between two of you named Windom and Yardley."

"When and under what circumstances did you overhear the conversation to which you refer?" asked the leader sharply.

Sid detailed what the reader already knows, how he sought shelter between two of the pillars of the portico of the Jupiter Building the afternoon when the shower of rain came up, and how he had overheard the two gentlemen, who addressed each other as Windom and Yardley, who stood between the second and third pillars, talking about the deal that was under way.

"I see," replied the leader in a vexed tone. "That explains how you learned that Mrs. Fairfax had the stock, and you stole a march on us. Gentlemen," he added, turning to the other six, "I think we had better take this young man in with us conditionally."

"Conditionally?" echoed the others.

"Yes. Remove your masks, gentlemen; there is no longer need for them."

As he spoke he released Sid from the rope. All hands then unmasked, and the leader stood forth as Raynor, as Sid suspected.

"Fenton, since we are obliged to come to terms with you, it must be on the following condition: You will turn your option over to me so that we can control the shares. This is necessary in order that they may not be used against us when the price rises. In return I will pledge my word that you shall participate in the profits to the extent of 15,000 shares on the same footing as the rest of us. You will thus have the gain without the risk and worry of following the deal up. Is it satisfactory to you?"

"It is, Mr. Raynor. I believe your word is as good as your bond, and I will not ask you for a receipt."

"Now the option, please," said Raynor.

Sid went to his safe, unlocked it and handed the option to the broker.

"Gentlemen, you are witness to this agreement, which we are pledged to carry out," said Raynor.

The six men bowed in an affirmative.

"Fenton, I am bound to say that you're a clever young fellow, and that you have good nerve," said Raynor, holding out his hand, which Sid took. "You will make a good thing out of this. You will, of course, be as silent as a clam, as a whisper as to our intentions would ruin everything."

"You can depend on me, Mr. Raynor. We are partners so far as this deal is concerned. I may say that I am glad that I do not have to fight you for my rights."

The seven brokers comprising the Raynor clique walked out of the office, and a few minutes afterward Sid, with a contented look on his face, went home. He said nothing to Edith about his strenuous interview with the clique, and merely told her that the deal was progressing favorably. The Raynor crowd having no longer any reason for keeping H. & O. down, the price at once advanced till it reached 70. Then H. & O. attracted attention and outsiders began looking for the stock. As the syndicate had it cornered there was little to be had, and the boom set in at once. Ultimately the Raynor crowd unloaded at 90, making a million and a half apiece, while Fenton & Holland cleared \$450,000 for their share.

That gave the firm a working capital of over half a million for future operations. When Edith told her aunt that she had promised to become Sid's wife when he reached his twenty-first birthday the aunt offered no objections to the match. She regarded the young broker as in every way a suitable husband for her niece. The firm of Fenton & Holland was worth over a million on the day that the ceremony united Sid and Edith in the bonds of wedlock. When they returned from their honeymoon trip they took possession of an elegant home erected by Sid in the Bronx, and Edith had no objection to her husband's aunt coming there to live, as Sid wanted her to share his prosperity while she lived. Sid still operates under the firm name of Fenton & Holland, and regularly turns over to his wife a half share of the profits of the business, which is very large.

Next week's issue will contain "A WAIF'S LEGACY; OR, HOW IT MADE A POOR BOY RICH."

WILL, THE WAGON BOY

or, The Diamonds that Came by Express

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story.)

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued)

"How can you know all this?" demanded the opera singer. "It is impossible unless he told you."

"Madam, he has told me nothing. I can read your mind like an open book."

"Let me go," breathed the woman. "Let me go."

"Not yet!"

"Is he dead?

"He is not dead. Understand, he would never have given up the diamonds to you if he had got them. He would have murdered you first. He is not a member of the Bogano family. He is a renegade officer in the British army, from which he was dismissed for cowardice. He took refuge in Bulgaria, and served on the Prince's private staff. Hence he learned his secrets, and when he found the diamonds were to be sent to you in accordance with the promise made to you by the Prince, he preceded them to this country, and conceived a plan to get them—a plan which failed. Madam, the real name of the man is Captain Bogan; he is your bitter enemy. I am your friend."

"You—you know so much—where are the diamonds?" faltered Madame Sandusky, never removing her eyes from the doctor.

"Come!" cried Pajaro. "Come with me if you want to see the diamonds. Come now!"

He backed toward the door. To his great relief, he found that the woman should follow him. He expected her to do it. He had hard work to keep from doing the same himself. They passed out of the room and Will heard them ascend the stairs. Now his wits began to return. Horrified at what he had done, he was almost inclined to take the opportunity to escape from the house, for Rumbejo had vanished, and he was alone with the man he believed he had killed.

But where could he go? If there was indeed a reward offered for his capture, what chance had he to escape arrest. Then, could he desert this man who had been so kind to him—to whom he owed his life?"

"No! It was not to be. No matter what trouble might come of his hasty action Will felt that he could do no less than stand by Dr. Pajaro to the end."

He advanced toward the giant. To his great relief he found that the man was breathing. At that moment there came a violent ring at the door-bell, several times repeated. He heard Rumbejo call upstairs in Hindustanee. The doctor answered, and came bounding down. Will heard the door open and a gruff voice demand:

"Say, what's the matter here? Was you calling for the police? What's wrong?"

"Ah, thank you," replied the doctor; "it is nothing. Merely one of my patients, a young man who is quite insane. He is quiet now. It is nothing, sir. Nothing at all."

Will peered through the crack of the door, and

saw a burly officer standing in the hall. He saw too, that the doctor had those wonderful eyes of his fixed upon the man. Could he control this policeman's mind as he had controlled Madame Sandusky's? He could and did.

"I thought it must be some mistake," said the policeman. "There was never no trouble in this house before."

"Never," replied the doctor, "and never will be. But you have had the trouble of coming here, officer; take this for it—it is between ourselves."

Will saw the bill pass into the policeman's hands. There was more talk, and the officer withdrew. The doctor now returned to the room and walked straight up to our hero.

"Will, Will! You have saved my life!" he cried. "I shall never forget!"

Then he threw his arm around Will's neck and kissed him, adding:

"So long as I live you are my friend!"

Will pulled away with a shudder. For the first time a feeling of horrible fear of this strange man came over him. He felt as if he had been kissed by a snake.

"Now," said the doctor, "we shall see if he is dead."

"Where is Madame Sandusky?" demanded Will.

"A prisoner upstairs, where she must remain for the present. It is for your sake, Will."

"Let her go," said Will. "I want nothing to do with her."

"Let her go to return with the police? Don't be a fool!" cried the doctor. "If I let her go your fate is sealed. It is easier to get into the Tombs than to get out again. They may not be able to prove the murder against you, but years may pass before you are tried and acquitted. Your laws are so strange. Many innocent are condemned, many guilty escape. Will, you stick to me. Would you like to go to India with me as my friend?"

A moment before Will would have jumped at the chance, but now his feelings had changed. He could not forget that snaky kiss, and shook his head. Bending over the giant, the doctor listened at his heart and made a hasty examination of his bleeding head.

"It is all right!" he exclaimed, rising. "His skull is not even fractured. There is nothing serious here."

He clapped his hands, calling out in Hindustanee. There were others in the house besides Rumbejo and the old cook, it seemed. In a moment two young Hindus wearing the native dress appeared, not a little to Will's surprise, for he had never seen them before.

"Take that man down to the bath," said the doctor. "Strip off his clothes, lay him in the hot room. In a few minutes I will come down and attend to him."

Big as Captain Bogan was, the two Hindus ought to have handled him. It was all they could do to lift him, however, and the doctor himself lent a hand, Will assisting. They took him first to the cooling room, where the Hindus proceeded to remove his clothes.

Then he was carried into the hot room and laid upon a couch. Will did not follow. The doctor ordered him to remain where he was. Returning in a few moments, he said:

"Come, Will! It is all right now. He has come back to life. I left him swearing like a pirate. He

wants his clothes. He was going to clean out the whole establishment, but I give him a dose which will keep him quiet for one while. Now for the diamonds, boy! The time has come for me to abandon the sanitarium business forever, and I shall retire gracefully this very night?"

"Have you got the diamonds, doctor?" asked Will, turning upon him suddenly.

The doctor laughed.

"No, no!" he replied. "I have got them to get! I have been waiting until such time as you were ready to help me. Well, perhaps I might have waited a day or two longer, but under the circumstances I think I may say the time has come."

CHAPTER VIII.

Will Turns Hindu, and Runs Away with Dr. Pajaro.

Will was growing more and more afraid of Dr. Pajaro, but, just the same, he had determined to stick to him, for his fear of arrest and the Tombs, not to say the electric chair, was greater still. The doctor now told him to return to his room upstairs, and he would join him in a few minutes.

"You had better take off your clothes," he added. "We want to get down to business quick, or some one else will be pulling our bell and making a row."

What did this mean? What strange plans had the doctor in his head now? Still Will obeyed him. He had become so accustomed to doing so during the week which had passed that he would scarcely have dared to refuse. It was only a few moments before Dr. Pajaro entered the room and locked the door behind him.

"Now then, Will," he said, "listen to me attentively. The diamonds which you carried in your wagon to the murdered lapidary were of far greater value than you are aware. While they were only invoiced at some two hundred thousand dollars, if they are what I believe them to have been, they are worth nearly double that sum. You want to know how that could be, of course, and I will explain. Among them were several of great size, which were merely imitations. These were skilfully made, and had been washed with a preparation which made them look like genuine stones. All this was frankly stated in the invoice, and so declared at the Custom House. These diamonds were in a small package by themselves, and were labeled imitations; as such, of course, there was no duty upon them. This, however, was done merely as a blind. Among these supposed imitations was one stone of immense size, which has been known in India for two thousand years, being originally the eye of an idol hidden deep in a rock temple located far up in the mountains in the kingdom of Ghorgee, of which my fath was rajah, and of which, if I chose to assert my claims I could be rajah today. This diamond is known as the 'Great Ghorgee' to experts all over Europe. It was stolen from the temple by a French officer in my grandfather's time. Once it formed part of the crown jewels of the Emperor Napoleon III, but when those were sold some years ago the Great Ghorgee went to an unknown purchaser, and its ownership has been a secret

ever since. I know that it was bought for the Prince Pojemkin, and that it forms a part of the missing diamonds which you carried in your wagon on that night. It was enclosed in the package along with the imitation stones in order to avoid the duty, which would, of course, have been enormous. Madame Sandusky knows this, and there is no doubt that Captain Bogan—our bogus prince—knows it, too. Probably it is known to others, and here you have the motive for the murder and the theft of the diamonds."

To all of this Will listened with wide-open eyes.

"Then the big diamond belongs to you?" he asked.

"It is certainly mine by right," replied the doctor. "If I can possess myself of it and on returning to India, as is my present intention, replace it in the eye of the idol, I shall be worshipped almost as a god by a quarter of a million people. The British government have long wanted me to assert my rights and assume the throne of Ghorgee, but I have preferred to be free and independent, and stick to my profession until now."

"And now you intend to do it?" asked Will.

"I do. I have made up my mind to start for Bombay as soon as I can recover the diamond. As for the rest of the stolen stones, I shall return them to Allen's Express; and as for you—"

And then the wagon boy felt that strange hypnotic influence which without his knowledge had been secretly influencing him right along.

"And as for me?" he repeated.

"If you want to go with me you shall be one of my court. I will make you rich. I will place you in a position of power. I will introduce you into such a life as you could hardly imagine in your wildest dreams. Will you go, not as my servant, but as my friend and brother? Answer now, once and for all, for whatever you say will be final, and the proposition will never be put up to you again."

"Yes," replied Will, "I will go," and if it had been to save himself from hanging he could not have said anything else.

"Good!" cried the doctor, looking immensely pleased. "Now to business. First of all we have to get the diamonds if I am to return to my hereditary kingdom with the Great Ghorgee."

"Do you know where they are?" demanded Will.

"No more than you do, but I know a way of finding out."

"How?"

"Ah, my boy, that's my secret. But I'll tell you this much: you alone can help me, and that is why I have taken you in hand."

"Though it is not altogether that!" he hastened to add, "for I have taken a great fancy to you, Will."

Will made no reply. Already he was beginning to regret his hasty decision, and the regrets came the moment the doctor's eyes were removed from him. Dr. Pajaro, however, gave him no time to think of the matter.

"First thing is to make you look like a Hindu," he said. "Pull off the balance of your togs and lie down on the bed, and I'll fix that."

Will had stripped to his underclothes, and he now removed those and threw himself on the bed. Producing from his pocket a small porcelain jar, the doctor spent half an hour rubbing Will from

head to foot with some sort of sweet-smelling ointment which it contained.

He first smeared it all over the boy's body and then rubbed it in with his hands until every vestige of it had disappeared. All this was mysterious enough, but the why of it Will was to learn later on.

"Now jump up and look at yourself in the glass," said the doctor.

Will did so. His whole body had turned a deep brown color. His face and hands looked much like the doctor's, but there was his shaven head covered with stubby, light hair.

"Dress yourself and I'll fix that," said the doctor, reading his thoughts. "Fortunately for my plans, you are one of those very rare persons who sport dark eyes with light hair. A wig will do the rest, and here are your new clothes, which came in from the tailor's last night after you had gone to sleep."

The doctor opened a closet and produced such a wardrobe as Will had never owned or hoped to own. When he was dressed and the doctor had fitted on a wig of long, straight, black hair, Will looked at the glass again. It was certainly wonderful. As he stood there with Dr. Pajaro's image reflected beside his own, it seemed to Will as if they might easily be mistaken for brothers by any one who was not too critical.

"Come," said the doctor. "We will go now. I think you can stand it. If not, why, I'll take care of you—never fear."

Go where? How could Will tell? A stylish coupe stood at the door, and they entered it and were driven away.

"There!" exclaimed the doctor, once they had started. "That's the end of the old sanitarium. I shall never return. Captain Borgan is all right, and first thing tomorrow Rumbejo will let him and Madame Sandusky out. It is a case of two crooks trying to rob each other. Let them make the most of it. They will never dare to move against me, and my lawyers can close out my belongings at auction and send me the price. Meanwhile, Will, you and I quietly disappear."

CHAPTER IX.

Dodging the Detectives.

Having said his last adieu to the sanitarium, Dr. Pajaro began to talk about other matters, or rather to start Will talking about himself and his early life. Will rattled away; he was beginning to enjoy the mystery of the situation, and especially this move toward freedom. His fears vanished. Once more he found himself turning toward Dr. Pajaro as a friend.

At the same time Will was not losing sight of the direction in which they were going, although it hardly needed much watching, for as soon as they reached Broadway they went straight downtown. At last they were below Fulton street, and Will began to wonder where this strange journey was going to end.

It ended at Cortlandt street. Here the doctor dismissed the cab and purchased two tickets for Philadelphia, going immediately on board the ferryboat.

"Are we going to Philadelphia to-night?" he then ventured to ask.

"No, Will. We are not going to Elizabeth."

"Why Elizabeth?"

"Come, you have braced up a lot to get a questioning fit on you. I'll answer this time, but no more, please, until we are all through with this business. You must not forget the reward offered for your capture. The detectives have searched for you everywhere. One of the first things they did was to search every hospital and sanitarium near New York, mine with the rest."

"While I was there?"

"Sure. I had a deuce of a job to hide you, but I did it all the same."

"And now you are trying to throw them off our track?"

"That's it; partly that and partly to ascertain if we are being followed. That's why I bought the Philadelphia tickets. Of course, there is no denying that we are two rather peculiar looking ducks, as people go in this part of the world. Of course, we are attracting more or less attention even at the present moment, as you can tell by glancing at the faces opposite. If there is a detective among them it is going to mean trouble, and in that case I might even go on to Philadelphia to set them guessing—don't you see?"

When the train reached Elizabeth, and Will and the doctor stepped off the smoker, a number of people left the train also.

A Jersey avenue car was in waiting, and the doctor promptly boarded it, others doing the same.

"We are being followed, all right," he whispered to Will.

"Who by?"

"See that tall man with the slouch hat standing on the rear platform?"

"Yes. He was on the ferryboat."

"Yes, and in the smoker."

"But how could he suspect? I am so changed."

"It may be me whom he suspects. How can we tell what steps Captain Bogan may have taken? He brought you to my house. Others know it. There was the driver of the cab in which you came, and a man sat inside when you were brought in. We simply can't be too careful. All the same I expect to be able to give this fellow the slip."

"Are you acquainted here?"

"I boarded here when I first came to America for a few weeks with a young fellow whose acquaintance I made on the steamer. I know something of the place. Be-ready to jump off as soon as I make a move. We will go out the front way."

But Doctor Pajaro made no move until they were almost down to the "Port," when he suddenly sprang up and left the car, closely followed by Will.

It was a lonely spot, a region of vacant lots and straggling houses.

Quick as lightning the doctor turned the corner by a saloon, and started up the street on the run.

"Someone coming!" breathed Will, hearing footsteps behind them.

"I know it! Follow me!"

Just ahead of their left stood a row of half-finished frame houses.

(To be continued)

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ITEMS OF INTEREST**WORDS WITH VOWELS IN THEIR ORDER**

L. N. Feifel kindly informs us that the word "arsenious" is the third word in the English language that has the five vowels in their order. As we said last Sunday the other two are "facetious" and "abstemious."

BIG ELEPHANTS PLANT TREES AT THE SESQUI-CENTENNIAL

Queenie, aged 62 years, and Babe aged 48, two huge elephants of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus, quit the "big top" during their stay in Philadelphia to devote a few hours toward aiding in planting some fifty-foot trees at the Sesqui-Centennial International Exposition which will be held in Philadelphia from June 1 to December 1.

The elephants picked the big trees up and placed them in holes that had been prepared by workmen. Ordinarily the tree-planting requires the placing of much tackle and the combined effort of many men.

The trees were planted around the "Save the Surface" Home which is being erected at the Exposition by the paint and varnish manufacturers of the United States.

HAS NEW CANCER THEORY

That the growth of cancer is fostered by oxygen is the belief advanced by Professor Otto Warburg, head of the Kaiser Wilhelm Biological Institute in Berlin.

A sensation has been created among scientists by an article written by Professor Warburg, in which he describes how rats withered and died within forty-eight hours when the oxygen inside the glass cage confining the rodents, was reduced to the minimum atmospheric ratio capable of sustaining life.

During the treatment, he says, the rats refused food, but immediately regained their normal vitality when the oxygen supply was increased.

Professor Warburg says he is not yet ready to believe that this treatment is applicable to human beings, but other scientists regard his experiments as an advancement toward the cure of cancer.

FIFTY-SEVEN YEAR OLD RUNNER ENTERS SESQUI MARATHON

Alvin O. Stenros, 40-year-old Olympic marathon champion of Finland, will not be the oldest contestant in the Sesqui-Centennial Shrine Marathon Run to be held in June from Valley Forge to Philadelphia as one of the opening week features of the Exposition, which opens in Philadelphia June 1 and continues for six months.

From Mays Landing, N. J., will come A. Monteverde, who admits he is 57 years old and still going strong in distance running. Monteverde began running back in 1880 and took up marathon racing around 1890. The race from the historic Washington Inn in Valley Forge to the New Municipal Stadium in Philadelphia will be Monteverde's 67th race.

Monteverde is a book-binder and his job gives him an opportunity to run five or six miles every day. This he increases to ten and eleven over the week-ends. He keeps in condition the year around, running in all sorts of weather. In the Detroit marathon a month ago, held in a rain and hail storm, Monteverde defeated a group of young men to a finish ten.

The marathon is attracting many out-of-town stars. Baltimore has decided to send the first seven men to the exhibition while the Ontario branch of the A. A. U. will pay the expenses of two men to enter the races also.

LAUGHS

Petticoats are showing these days—showing that they are absent.

Raising chickens pays. Running with "chickens" you have to pay.

An ankle watch would seem to be unnecessary when clocked stockings are worn.

The average man would draw the clothes line, but his wife won't let him.

"Well, here are two supporters I can always rely on," said the candidate for office as he fastened up his socks.

Well, if the world is flat as Voliva says, why don't they quit looking for the poles and see if they can't find some corners?

One man answers the question: "Should wives be paid wages?" in the hearty affirmative. He says if his wife doesn't get wages he may have to go to work himself.

"I saw you just now at the information booth." "I wanted to find out something." "You can't find out anything at the information booth." "That's what I found out."

Mrs. Harris (who has been promised a workman to repair the doorbell)—Why didn't you send your man to repair my electric doorbell as promised? Shopman ((politely))—He did go, madam, but as he rang three times and got no answer, he concluded there was nobody at home.

AFTER MANY YEARS

"Peyton Fordyce, of Fordyce Manor, was at one time a friend of mine," remarked a Scotland Yard detective, who had joined our party around a table in the "Chelsea Gardens," one hot evening, when a half-dozen of the force were gathered there.

"Do you mean Peyton Fordyce, the notorious?" I asked.

"I mean the very Peyton Fordyce whose history has at last been made public. Ten years ago or thereabouts—we won't be precise as to dates—Fordyce Manor was the home of Reginald Fordyce, an old 'bach' of sixty, who had adopted the son of his deceased sister, Emma Mortland. The boy was a handsome young fellow of twenty then, and just as smart and attractive a young gentleman as you'd wish to see."

"Before Peyton Fordyce arrived at Fordyce Manor it had come to the knowledge of his uncle Reginald that Dick Mortland had formed an attachment for the daughter of his gamekeeper, Mina Thursby by name.

"Now, of course, as you may suppose, old Reginald, who was as proud as Lucifer and boasted of his 'blood,' was by no means pleased with this. Like the foolish old fellow in the play, he ranted and raved and swore that there should be no mesalliance in young Dick's case, and he informed that young gentleman in the most positive terms that he must drop Miss Thursby instantly or he should never inherit a pound from him. Previous to his making the discovery of young Dick's love affair, be it known, he had expressed his intention to divide his fortune equally between Peyton Fordyce and his sister's son.

"The evening following that upon which he made known his ultimatum to Dick and peremptorily forbade his meeting the fair Mina again the young man was alone with his uncle in the latter's study at a very late hour, and the servants, as they chanced to pass the door from time to time, heard old Reginald and Dick Mortland conversing in loud and seemingly angry tones. Suddenly there was the sound of a pistol shot and when, a moment after, the servants rushed into the room from whence the sound proceeded—it came from the library, you understand—they saw Reginald Fordyce lying dead and old Tom Thursby, the gamekeeper, lying upon the floor with a bullet in his head, while the window was open, and so was the safe in which Reginald kept his money.

"The servants raised the old gamekeeper up, and he groaned out these words:

"The window was open. I came in to see the master, when Dick Mortland—Oh, my head is on fire!"

"The gamekeeper fainted before he could utter another word, and when he returned to consciousness he was stark mad. I may as well say right here, while I am speaking of him, that he recovered his bodily health to a degree but his mind was shattered and he was sent to an insane asylum in London for treatment.

"Under Peyton Fordyce's lead the grounds about the house were searched, and in a dark pool,

at a considerable distance, the following day the body of Reginald Fordyce was found.

"Every one believed Dick Mortland had robbed and murdered his uncle, else why did he run away, for he had absconded; and, although the country around was searched, no trace of him was found until next day, when he was discovered lying beside a hedge near a gypsy encampment four miles from the Grange.

"Mortland was arrested, and when he became sober he stated that he had drank a glass of wine early in the morning with Peyton Fordyce before the latter left the Manor House, as he did shortly afterward, and that he had, after taking the wine, experienced strange and to him unaccountable sensations from the moment he swallowed it until when, in heated argument with his uncle in the library, he became insensible just as the gamekeeper entered the library through the window.

"This was the young man's defense, but it had no weight with judge or jury and when he was convicted of his uncle's murder the only evidence showing that a doubt of his guilt had entered the mind of the judge was in the fact that, instead of condemning him to death he was sentenced to Van Dieman's Land for life.

"After Reginald Fordyce's murder his will was read and it was found that the deceased had divided his fortune equally between his two nephews, and, as Dick was dead in law, Peyton Fordyce inherited all.

"Three months after Dick was transported a young and beautiful girl, with the country bloom upon her cheeks, visited my London office. She introduced herself in these words:

"I am Mina Thursby, and I have come to consult you in the secret upon the case of Dick Mortland.

"I was engaged to Richard Mortland before Peyton Fordyce came to live at the manor, although we kept the matter a secret, well knowing that the knowledge of it would enrage Richard's uncle. From the first time I met Peyton Fordyce I disliked him, for I could see that there was an evil spirit under his pleasing manner but he fancied me and asked me to become his wife. I refused him, of course, and foolishly, as I know now, I confessed to him that I was engaged to Richard. I am sure also that my rejection of him and the knowledge that I had accepted Richard made Peyton the enemy of Richard. The night before the murder I saw Peyton Fordyce in earnest conversation with two of the gypsies who were encamped near the Manor, and I saw him give them money."

"Then she went on to tell me that her demented father was confined in a private asylum for the insane; that Peyton Fordyce had recommended the institution and paid for the unfortunate's treatment there; that she had visited him, and that he seemed to have every care and kindly treatment.

"I put two of my men, Paxton and Green—you all know them, and that they are keen ones—on the trail of the gypsies, and I made it a point to visit the asylum in which Mr. Thursby was confined. What was my surprise when I reached that institution to hear that Thursby had escaped. A diligent search was made for him, but he was not found."

"For once also my men failed to find the parties they were after, and it came out at a future time that the gypsy band who had camped near Fordyce Manor at the time of Reginald Fordyce's murder had gone to the United States.

"One night, nearly ten years, after the date of the murder, and when the affair had passed from my mind, almost, a stalwart, bearded man entered my office.

"You are Mr.—, the detective?" he said.

"I am, sir," I replied.

"My name is Richard Mortland," he said.

"I started to my feet."

"I am an escaped convict just from Van Dieman's Land, but I have become a detective—a convict detective. Ha, ha, ha!" he said, with an unmirthful laugh.

"I have a strange story to tell you, sir, and I have come to you because Mina Thursby tells me you have been her true friend all these years of our cruel separation.

"Six months ago I escaped from the penal settlement, on Sarah Island, in Gordon River, Van Dieman's Land, by smuggling myself as a stowaway on board an English supply steamer, which was bound for Sidney, the capital of Australia.

"I made the voyage and safely landed in Sidney undetected. Upon the streets of Sydney I met a demented man in the tattered garb of a sailor, and in him I recognized Mina's father, Mr. Thursby, the former gamekeeper of Fordyce Manor.

"He did not know me, but I befriended him and one day while we were at work on a scaffold he fell and struck upon his head, fracturing the exterior blades of the skull. In performing an operation which was necessary to save his life the surgeon found a pistol bullet pressing down a piece of the interior of the skull bone upon the brain, and he removed it, thus taking the pressure from his brain, which had been constant while the pistol ball remained in his skull.

"When Thursby recovered his reason was fully restored.

"Of all that occurred before he had received the shot which deprived him of his reason his memory was clear. He knows who killed my uncle, Reginald Fordyce, and he will make oath to the following statement:

"A moment after he entered the library I fell senseless. At the same moment a man clad in gypsy garb, followed by Peyton Fordyce, came through the window. They seemed surprised to find him there. The gypsy leaped at Thursby, while Peyton Fordyce plunged his knife into his uncle's heart.

"The gypsy clutched Thursby by the throat, thus preventing his making any outcry, and while they struggled, and taking the key from his uncle, Peyton rifled the safe. By this time Thursby was getting the advantage of the gypsy, and Peyton came close to him and discharged the shot which wounded him in the head. Thinking Thursby dead, the moment he fell, Peyton, who was a herculean man, as was also his gypsy comrade jumped through the window and ran away.

"This Thursby saw before he became unconscious." After that we consulted for some time, and

next day we proceeded to Fordyce Manor to arrest Peyton.

Mortland had vowed to make the arrest in person.

"I hid myself in the woods and Mortland approached the manor house, but he had not proceeded far when he encountered the new gamekeeper's son with his dog.

"The boy demanded to know what the roughly dressed and bearded stranger wanted, and Mortland said:

"Lead me to your master."

"Here come master and the bailiff now," said the boy.

"A moment later Peyton Fordyce, still looking young and handsome in his spruce garb, approached with a legal-looking old gentleman, who walked with a cane.

"This here stranger wants to see you, master," said the boy, indicating Mortland.

The convict detective wheeled upon Fordyce and seized him by the throat.

"I am Richard Mortland, the man whom you doomed to ten years of penal servitude, fiend, and I have returned to have my revenge!" shrieked Mortland, and as he spoke he hurled Fordyce to the ground and handcuffed him.

"You all know the rest, boys.

"Richard Mortland was pardoned and his innocence proclaimed. During Fordyce's trial a gypsy sentenced for a murder committed in Wapping confessed that he had been Peyton Fordyce's accomplice in the crime at Fordyce Manor. He said that Fordyce had drugged Mortland's wine with an East Indian opiate and that the villain had placed in his pocket the money found there.

"Mina Thursby and Mortland were married lately and, as he now inherits the Fordyce estate, I see no reason why their future should not be a happy one."

RIFFIAN MESSENGER, 67, RUNS SEVENTY MILES BETWEEN SUNSET AND SUNRISE OVER ROUGH COUNTRY

Carrying a dispatch nearly seventy miles, which he said he had made on foot from sunset to sunrise, Hammouch Ben Hadge, an old Riffian warrior, was hailed here as the creator of a new marathon record.

Panting from his prolonged exertion, the Riffian, who is 67 years old, reached the gates of Oudja at daybreak one morning and ran up to the French sentry.

"Please direct me to the house of the Riffian delegation. Allah is great!" he said.

The sentry directed him to the house occupied by Si Mohammed Azerkane, the Riffian "Foreign Minister," where Hadge delivered his message, "No peace without autonomy."

Hadge, who is connected with the force about Abd-el-Krim, had received the dispatch that night and had come from the Atlas Hills to Oudja, a distance of 110 kilometers, or nearly seventy miles.

After partaking of coffee and rolls the old Riffian seemed fresher than did Albin Stenroos after winning the Olympic marathon race at Paris in 1924.

GOOD READING

GALLONS OF GASOLINE

Gasoline production in the United States is now at the nearly record level of 21,666 gallons a minute.

DIAMONDS IN U. S.

Pike County, Ark., which has the largest peach orchard in the country, has the only diamond mine on the Western Hemisphere, has a bed of asphalt and an oil well and is now producing sapphires which were cut by an expert gem cutter and which rival the diamonds in their brilliancy.

KANSAS CURE FOR DRUNKEN DRIVERS

Officials of Kansas City believe they have found a "sure cure" for reckless and drunken drivers. Guilty motorists work out sentences in a muddy-floored rock quarry. They swing sledges and picks, wield shovels and trundle rock for eight long hours, while chained by irons.

CLINIC TO TREAT MENTAL ILLNESSES WITH PSYCHOLOGY

Here's the latest in clinics. Social agencies, professional and civic authorities have formulated plans here for the permanent establishment of a mental hygienic clinic.

This clinic when established will deal with the problems of "behaviorism"—the psychologist's term used in describing human conduct. Remedies will be sought for certain social ills that exist due to lack of mind training.

FALLING PLANE KILLS MOTORIST IN STREET IN COLORADO SPRINGS

An airplane fell in the middle of a downtown business street some time ago and killed a man in an automobile. Two occupants of the plane were injured seriously.

Richard Ragan, 26, of Colorado Springs, was sitting in his automobile when the plane, circling 1,000 feet above the city, experienced trouble. Norman Lee, student aviator, found the control bar out of order. Ray Varney, acting as an instructor, worked frantically to gain control of the machine, but as the plane swung 400 feet above the business district it suddenly slipped into a tail spin.

Ragan was killed almost instantly. Lee and Varney were hurried to a hospital, where physicians said their condition was serious.

CAMDEN BRIDGE TO OPEN GATES ON 4TH OF JULY.

One of the last gaps in the broad ribbon of highway which now stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific will be closed on July 4 when the Camden bridge, connecting Philadelphia and Camden over the Delaware River, is opened to traffic.

It is the longest suspension bridge in the world. Its cost will run close to \$40,000,000.

Motorists who use the graceful structure will not think of these things as they whiz over the

concrete floor of the span. To them it will be just another roadway, accepted as such because it is there.

But, nevertheless, the Camden bridge is considered one of the most important structures in the United States, built to relieve a congested ferry traffic which at times has become so jammed that motorists have had to wait in line five, six and eight hours before they could nose their machines upon a boat. That is true, of course, only of the very busy week-ends in the summer months, when Pennsylvania and Philadelphia and other towns and states pour out their populations for Sunday trips to the wonder resorts of the south Jersey coast.

Camden is the gateway. South of Trenton there has been no way to cross the Delaware River except by ferry and, with congestion at its height, many motorists have driven thirty miles north of Camden to cross the stream at Trenton, so that they could hasten to their Philadelphia homes—a sixty-mile detour because there was no bridge to take them the stone's throw across the river.

During 1925 the ferries between Camden and Philadelphia carried 5,700,000 vehicles. In 1905 this traffic just reached the 1,000,000 mark. In 1920 it had increased to only 2,424,800 vehicles; but in 1924 it more than doubled and went to 4,930,000. By July of this year, it is estimated that ferry traffic will have reached the staggering total of 6,000,000 vehicles a year—and then the bridge will be opened.

What will happen?

When motorists reach the bridge they will find a structure 9,600 feet long from the beginning of one approach to the end of the other. The main span, through which the Camden bridge has earned the title of "longest suspension bridge in the world," is 1,750 feet. The vehicular capacity is figured at 6,000 cars an hour. The width of the automobile roadway between curbs is 57 feet, and the total width of the bridge, over all, is 124 feet.

The clearance above mean high water is 135 feet and from the top of the towers to mean high water the drop is 385 feet. No man engaged in construction has fallen from the top of the towers, but several have been plunged into the river from the suspended structure. Two came out alive. Six others perished. Twelve have been killed during the construction.

The bridge, when fully completed, will contain 50,000 tons of steel, 276,300 cubic yards of concrete and 216,300 yards of masonry work in the anchorages. One coat of paint for the bridge consumed 5,000 gallons.

Unlike the New York bridges, the Camden bridge is suspended by two cables, instead of four. These cables are twenty-nine and one-half inches in diameter and each contains 18,666 single wires .02 of an inch in diameter. The cables are 3,550 feet long and weigh 7,100 tons. The total length of the wires in these cables is 25,100 miles—more than enough to encircle the earth. The actual construction time of the bridge will be four years and six months.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

SNAKES INVADE R. R. STATION

"Wow! Wait till I kill this big snake!" yelled W. B. Kinney, third trick block telegrapher of the W. & A. Railroad, at the dispatcher's telephone as he was reporting a train. His eyes registered horror as a four-foot rattlesnake came writhing through the door into the office. Kinney bombarded the reptile with about everything movable in reach, finally smashing the snakes' head. Long continued drought had emboldened snakes, who were desperate in their hunt for water.

1000 KARATS OF DIAMONDS USED IN FORD FACTORIES

Who would think to look in an automobile factory for diamonds? Yet in the Detroit plants of the Ford Motor Company more than 1,000 carats of the precious stones are in use in the manufacture of motor cars. But the diamonds that have their part in the production of improved Fords do not enjoy the life of ease and luxury characteristic of the social variety of gem.

Few persons would consider pressing their most choice diamonds against the whirling surface of a grinding wheel or drilling holes in them, yet that is what happens every day to these commercial stones. The majority of them are used either to dress grinding wheels or are drilled to permit hundreds of miles of wire to be drawn through them daily.

Grinding wheels soon pick up enough steel to become glazed and grooved. Then the diamond comes into use and is forced against the running grinding wheel until the old surface has been cut away. Until recently a much larger stock of diamonds than that used as present was necessary to keep the grinding wheels in condition. Development of abrasives of a new degree of hardness, however, has relieved the diamonds of the heaviest cutting work, and they are now used only in the finer dressing operations.

Even a diamond will not stand up long under such treatment and steadily loses weight from its first day on the job. The biggest commercial diamond ever used by the company, weighing approximately 67.82 carats, lasted about two years. Others become valueless after a few weeks and some break down under the severe treatment in an hour.

Diamonds also play a major role in the drawing of copper wire. In this department the wire, about as large in diameter as a lead pencil, is drawn down to sizes which vary to less than the thickness of a hair. This drawing process is simple—in theory. The wire is merely pulled through a series of graduated holes until it has been drawn down to the desired size.

There is no substitute for the diamond in the finer operations of wire drawing. Steel dies may be used in the first few reductions, but as the wire becomes smaller, such a terrific strain is exerted that only a diamond will stand up for any length of time. The largest of the diamond dies is about one-tenth of an inch in diameter

and the smallest is less than four-one-thousandths of an inch with 36 intermediate sizes.

In solving the problem of drilling holes of graduated diameters through a score of diamonds designed as dies, Ford engineers have reverted to the old adage of diamond cut diamond. After centering the stone in a plug similar to a thick silver quarter, the hole is started with a diamond chip. Then a small quantity of fine diamond dust is introduced, and, by means of a rotating and oscillating needle, is made to slowly and evenly grind through the die stone.

Commercial diamonds contrast sharply with jewelry gems in color. Stones in use in Ford car manufacture are not unlike a chip of coal in appearance. In value, however, they are practically equal to the social variety.

PERILS OF THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

The successful return of MacMillan and Amundsen from their latest expeditions to the north, recalls that many earlier explorers gave their lives to Arctic adventure and that a long line of sturdy ships has surrendered to the ice. Less than two years ago, William Nutting and three companions set out from Norway to follow the Viking trail to America in their little ship, the Lief Ericson. They disappeared after leaving the coast of Greenland. Earlier centuries had their Arctic expeditions. In 1500, Gaspar Cortereal, a Portuguese explorer, ventured into Hudson Strait in a small craft and was never heard from again, says *Popular science Monthly*. His brother and a number of companions who organized a searching expedition, likewise were lost. Four hundred years before there was a map of the Arctic, Sir Hugh Willoughby sailed into the north, later to be found dead with his crew and the ship frozen fast in the ice. Sir Martin Frobisher's search for the northwest passage in 1590 met with partial disaster when one of his three ships foundered in a gale. Bering made many expeditions during the middle part of the eighteenth century, but was finally wrecked on the island, that now bears his name, and died there, legend says, of a broken heart. After a successful voyage into northern seas with Peary, in 1893, and a relief expedition, a year later, the Falcon, commanded by Captain Henry Bartlett, a skilled navigator, was lost with all her crew. The first "mariner of the air" to be claimed by the Arctic was Salomon August Andree, who, with two companions, left Spitzbergen in 1897 in a balloon fitted with sails and trailing ropes. They hoped to reach the Pole and return, but a few of the buoys dropped from the basket as a means of tracing the expedition and a message brought by a carrier pigeon, were all that came back of the ill-fated venture. In May, 1825, Sir John Franklin, with 129 men and the Erebus and the Terror, set out to find a northwest passage. Neither the ships nor any of the men returned. Thirty relief expeditions, over as many years, were sent in search of them, although a message found fourteen years after the men had sailed, stated that the ships had been crushed in the ice.

FROM EVERYWHERE

BEE CAUSES AUTO ACCIDENT

It became known today that Dr. Roy D. Duckworth of Harvard Court, White Plains, narrowly escaped injury lately when his car jumped the Mount Kisco road north of Armonk and turned over after a bee had flown into his eye, temporarily blinding him. Dr. Duckworth crawled from beneath the badly damaged machine and was taken to his home by a passing motorist. He was uninjured.

BULL DIES FIGHTING AUTO

The State Constabulary was recently notified that an automobile operated by Ralph Brunzel of Red Hook came out the better in an "encounter" with a bull near Coldwater, Orange County. The bull charged the machine three times and was killed in the final attack.

A boy was leading the bull along the highway. Persons in a passing automobile shouted and struck at the animal and it got away from the boy. Dashing down the highway, the frenzied bull plunged three times into the sedan car driven by Mr. Brunzel. The automobile was damaged but not disabled.

ROUGH RIDERS

The "Rough Riders" was the popular name given to the First Regiment of Volunteer Cavalry, which was organized in the Southwest at the opening of the war with Spain. Leonard Wood, now a major-general in the United States Army, was colonel, and Theodore Roosevelt lieutenant-colonel. Later the command came to Colonel Roosevelt. The regiment was composed of expert riders from all over the country, cowboys from the plains, society men from New York and New England, who had ridden to hounds, etc. The words "rough rider" is applied to a horseman who can ride any horse with or without a saddle. They wore the regular campaign dress of the cavalry, tan felt hat, blue shirt, khaki trousers and leggings. The regiment numbered several hundred, divided into the regulation of cavalry troops. The regiment took part in the skirmishes leading to the battle of San Juan and in the battle itself, where Roosevelt led the charge.

PREHISTORIC BONES ARE FOUND UPSTATE

Tidings of a prehistoric race, centuries buried, have come from the shores of Cayuga Lake, N. Y. Deep down among the age-old deposits of earth on Frontenac Island have been found the crushed and crumbling skeletons and other remnants of American aborigines who fished Cayuga's waters long before the red man.

Donald A. Cadzow, ethnologist and archaeologist of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York City, who made the find some time ago, plans to return to the island to continue his explorations.

Experts have characterized the discoveries as among the most valuable ever made in America, believing that they may reveal life in the first period of Algonquin Indian occupation, or before. Pending Mr. Cadzow's return the people of Union

Springs are guarding the island, and no one is allowed on the grounds.

Mr. Cadzow says the bones are those of Algonquins of the first of the four periods of their occupancy of America, and experts think they may have been buried 1,500 years.

"They are the bones of men who roamed the lake country centuries before the coming of the Iroquois," asserts Mr. Cadzow. They represent a type too primitive to know the simplest form of pottery making. Crude were their implements, clumsy their arrow points, rude their tools. In this archaic period they did not know how to make and use a pipe. The remains more nearly resemble those of the earliest Eskimo than any I have ever seen."

Much of Frontenac Island apparently is solid rock. Upon the 200 square feet above water the explorer found the burial ground, and that he believes may be the site of the village. Here the stone base of the island is buried two and a half feet in earth which the explorer thinks is purely Algonquin deposit and made of ashes, refuse and accumulations of the ages. The first foot of soil gave up pottery and other relics of the later and more advanced Algonquin peoples, and as greater depths were reached still stranger relics were disclosed.

On the bottom, crushed against the island's stone foundation, were found fourteen skeletons. They were shattered and ravaged by age, but it was possible to piece them together, although days were required in lifting out and assembling the crumbling human bones. The explorer believes the position of the skeleton alone proved their age, for all were lying prone upon the bedrock in direct variance with the burial customs of the later Algonquins and the Iroquois.

Bannerstones of white limestone, believed to be the first to be found in an Indian burial ground in the Middle Atlantic States or Southern Ontario, were disclosed beside one skeleton. A bone object, apparently representing a deer head, also was found, and near it three large beaver incisors, a small notched flint arrow point, three antler flakers, two bone arrow points and the bones of a swan. In the right hand of one skeleton was found a small bone spoon and near it three small beaver teeth, an imperfect barbed harpoon point and an antler flaker.

All the skeleton were taken to the New York City museum for further examination.

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